

Art. Ravel
Honegger, Pauline, Milhaud cont.
101 Debussy

disques

MAY
1930

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FOR MAY

1930

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H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA



MAURICE RAVEL

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MAY, 1930

No. 3

DISQUES is a fine little magazine but where do you find enough people who are interested to make it worth your while to publish it? This question in one form or another comes to us every day. In your immediate neighborhood only a very few people may be interested in building record libraries but when you multiply your little group by the thousands of communities throughout the U. S. A. you have a vast army of music lovers who are vitally interested in fine recordings. It is odd, but it is a fact, that each little group imagine they are the only ones who are interested in records. The number of people who are intensely interested as indicated by the subscriptions we are receiving each day surprises everyone.



Where do most of them come from? Of the first 500 subscriptions, 125 came from Pennsylvania, 69 from New York, 36 from California, 34 from Massachusetts and 32 from Illinois. Eliminating the District of Columbia, which would come within the next five, we wonder if any of our readers after carefully studying *The Literary Digest* poll and listening to Floyd Gibbons each evening, could

name the five states which follow in their correct order.



If any of our readers think they can name the next five states in the order of their interest in recorded music as indicated by the number of subscriptions included in the first 500 received, they are invited to send in their lists (via mail only). To all those who send in correct lists or to the one who sends in the nearest to the correct list we will present a ten dollar set of records of their own choice. Anyone may send in a list. It is not necessary to be a subscriber. Only one list may be submitted by any one person. All lists must reach us not later than June 1, 1930. The winners or winner will be announced in the July issue. It is all for fun. Send in your lists promptly.



One of the strangest, most baffling and perhaps the last of those brilliant personalities that clustered around Richard Wagner during the latter part of the past century passed away April 1st, when Cosima Wagner died at Bayreuth in her ninety-third year. Daughter of Franz Liszt and widow of Wagner, this remarkably gifted and extraordinary woman remains today as little comprehended, as thor-

oughly puzzling and as much of an enigma as she was only a few years ago when she ruled Bayreuth. Stories about her are fiercely contradictory. She is blamed for many things—for distorting the official autobiography and suppressing valuable facts in order to give the world a prettier picture, for her domineering spirit at Bayreuth and her stubborn insistence upon establishing what she conceived to be a tradition there, for her tyrannical attitude toward artists and conductors who refused to accept this tradition as authentic, and for countless other sins, some real, some imaginary.



Yet, though her purposes and intentions were often ill-advised and misguided, her unquestionable devotion to Wagner and his works cannot readily be forgotten. She accomplished certain very definite and praiseworthy things, things which had an immediate and powerful influence upon bringing Wagner's work to the attention of a world notoriously slow and suspicious in recognizing genius. While it is certain that Wagner would eventually have come into his own, the fact remains that Cosima, using her lordly and ruthless methods, made the process much easier and smoother and helped him win fame at precisely the time it was most needed. These services cannot be overlooked; they must be taken into account before anything properly describable as a fair and accurate estimate of this vivid character can be formed. That she was the greatest woman of her day is pretty well established. Nietzsche, Anton Rubinstein, Engelbert Humperdinck—these were only a few of the hundreds who were compelled to admit her essential greatness. The last vestige of a great age, she already seems almost legendary. In the numerous books dealing with Wagner that are said to be in preparation she will have to take a prominent and important part.



We are very glad to welcome to our columns Mr. Peter Hugh Reed, whose wide reputation has been gained through the many fine articles he has contributed to various musical publications. Mr. Reed's many interests keep him very much occupied but we hope he will find time to prepare other articles for us in the near future.



For those readers who are already planning to have their copies of *Disques* bound we will say that the page size will remain the same for the first volume. A proper index and title page will be made available with or included in the twelfth issue.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscription price \$1.50 per year (Outside U. S. A., \$2.00 per year). All subscriptions should be sent and all checks drawn to the order of H. Royer Smith Co., 10th and Walnut Streets, Philadelphia, Pa., U. S. A. As an index will be published at the end of the year you should specify that your subscription start with the March issue (Vol. I, No. 1). Back numbers may be had at 15c each postpaid.

CODE

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer and all records are domestic releases unless the word **IMPORTED** appears directly under the number: B-Brunswick, C-Columbia, EB-Edison-Bell, FO-Fonotopia, G-National Gramophonic Society, HO-Homocord, O-Odeon, PA-Parlophon, PD-Polydor, R-Regal (English), and V-Victor.

A Frenchman Turns to Spain

RICHARD GILBERT

Maurice Ravel has recently passed his fifty-fifth birthday. And reaching a period when artistic senility might be expected he occasionally emerges from his home at Mortfort-l'Amaury with his tonal necromancy unimpaired by deterioration of any sort. His growth is emphasized by a continued evolution in which he always contrives to remain thoroughly contemporary in feeling. His love for Spain and Spanish musical idioms still exercises the old fascination, which was apparent at the beginning of his career in *Habanera* (1895) and *Pavane pour une Infante defunte* (1899). At a time when musicians and critics were about to consign Monsieur Ravel to a place among the "finished" or, at the least, to a previous decade, the ravishing, brilliantly orchestrated *Bolero* came as an explosion in their midst. In this return to the Spain, so vividly described in *Rapsodie espagnole*, there is evident the Ravel of old, completely himself in style, but never tenacious, and establishing—among other things—the fact that he is indisputably the most skilled of modern orchestral elaborators. Instead of reiterating former methods or being given to quotation, the new opus possesses the amazing quality of sparkling, spontaneous, youthful exuberance. Ravel's instrumental art combines the most varied play of sonorous effects and colors with a remarkable economy of means. He is a veritable magician of the orchestra; a pedant never, and his experiments are always successful and enlivening. *Bolero* overflows with life as does the earlier *Rapsodie espagnole* with its irresistible rhythmic force and dazzling color.

That Ravel's art is a highly developed objective expression, dealing almost exclusively with externals, cannot be denied. There is little of contemplative and deeply emotional utterance in his pen. Of course, there are exceptions, but when Ravel allows himself to become humanistic there is always about the utterance a protective shell of irony. This art, nevertheless, reflects the composer's interesting self in a great many manifestations and tells us of a personality of immense refinement, broadly cultured, observantly witty or ironical, and always aloof. Ravel is a modernist without being either abstruse or merely novel.

He was born at Ciboure in the Pyrénées, March 7, 1875. Being somewhat of a Basque (no one knows exactly where the Basques came from) this proximity to Spain and almost Iberian nativity may account for his love of rhythms, melodies and colors imbued with the Spanish temperament. Ravel has, again and again, shown a nostalgic affection for this southern atmosphere (*Habanera*, C-2081D; *Rapsodie espagnole*, V-W1029 and V-W1030; *Alborado del Gracioso*, V-D1594; *L'Heure espagnole*, French Columbia Set; *Les Sites auriculaires*; *Vocalise*; *La vallée des cloches*—from "*Miroirs*," V-EG815). On the other hand, his confrere, Claude Debussy, of more northern blood, has displayed an equal affinity to Spain (*Soiree dans Grenade*, C-D15245; *La Puerta del Vino*; *Iberia*, Columbia Set No. 67) so that our thesis loses much of its force on these grounds. Early in his life Ravel's parents moved to Paris where he received his education, later entering the Conservatoire. His individuality was particularly noticeable at the outset in *Habanera*, a dainty little piece, later incorporated in the third movement of *Rapsodie espagnole*. Gabriel Fauré and Emmanuel Chabrier, rather than Debussy, were the first musicians to exercise an influence upon the work of the young Ravel. Ravel also owes much to Eric Satie. From the very first, he possessed a great ability to combine respect for classical formulae with the most extraordinary liberty in invention in harmony and rhythm. *Pavane pour une Infante defunte* (C-157M),

for piano; the cantata *Myrrha*, with which he carried off the second *Prix de Rome* (1901); *Jeux d'Eau* (C-1864D), in which he introduced a perfectly new manner of piano writing; the *Quartet in F* (French Columbia Set) all followed in rapid succession and definitely brought Ravel's work to the notice of the musical public. He continued to create works of surprising freshness and increasing value: *Shéhérazade*—three melodies for voice and orchestra (V-W993 and V-P790), *Introduction et Allegro pour Harpe à pedales avec accompagnement de Quatuor à cordes*, *Flûte et Clarinette* (V-C1662 and V-C1663), *Miroirs*, etc., up to the ravishing and scintillating *Rapsodie espagnole* (1907).

A curious fact is that although Maurice Ravel is a born orchestrator, and his command of the orchestral medium is unsurpassed, he has written comparatively little for the orchestra. Only three of his orchestral works were written originally in that form. They are *Rapsodie espagnole*, the ballet *Daphnis et Chloé* (V-7143 and V-7144) and the recent *Bolero* (B-90039 and B-90040). *Ma Mère l'Oye* (Columbia Set No. 74) was originally a suite for piano duet, written in 1908 and orchestrated for ballet in 1912. *Pavane pour une Infante defunte* was arranged for orchestra the same year as it was composed for piano, 1899 (V-9306 or PD-66726). The jovial and ironic *Alborado del Gracioso*—Morning Serenade of a Merry Wit—has as much to teach, in the earlier piano version appearing in the collection *Miroirs*, on the art of pianoforte writing as it has, in the later orchestration, on the art of writing for a large group of instruments. To the above list may be added the excerpt "Five o'clock" from *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* (V-9306). We do not know the original form of its composition.

Rapsodie espagnole: Prélude à la nuit—(a) *Malagueña*, (b) *Habanera*—*Féria*. Played by Grand Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Piero Coppola. Two 12-inch discs (French Gramophone W1029 and W1030). Price, \$2.00 each. Miniature score—Durand et Cie, Paris. The work is completely recorded.

Rapsodie espagnole was written in 1907. The work is scored for a large orchestra of two piccolos, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets in B \flat , bass clarinet in B \flat , three bassoons, sarrusophone, four horns in F, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourines, castanets, side drum, xylophone, celesta, two harps and the usual *quintette à cordes*.

The first movement is invocative of the warm, perfumed evening. The magic charms of the Ravellian instrumentation, subtly alembicating vivid impressions of an Iberian night, prepare the mood in a most effective fashion; a figure of four notes separated by intervals of the second is veritably the motto of the *Prélude*. This figure occurs over and over again in an ingenious progression of finely aggregated combinations of orchestral colors. With recourse to no conventional methods Ravel distills an atmosphere of the redolent night, pervaded with mysterious glamourings and recondite effusions.

Now begin the dances, voluptuous in the extreme and instilled with the languor and passion of Spain. *Malagueña*, as the name indicates, is a dance originating in the province of Malaga. It is composed of two rhythms; one is heard at first played by the 'cellos and bass, the other makes a late appearance on muted trombone and kettle drums. The four note figure of the *Prélude* appears at the end. In the *Habanera*, the strings strike the rhythm, the oboes and English horn sing the theme (from the earlier piano piece) which is afterwards taken up by the violins.

Féria is the crowning movement of the work. Paul Rosenfeld has remarked that if there is a single modern composition which can be compared to *Petrouchka*

for its picture of mass-movement, its pungent naturalism, it is the *Féria* of the *Rapsodie espagnole*. By this time we are completely charmed by the persuasive version of the Spanish idiom, our attention riveted by the rhythmic and coloristic virtuosity. We are well prepared for the daring alternation of sensibility and brilliance which the final movement contains. Flutterings, laughter, cries of joy, suppressed clamor, shaded corners and intense lightings, all of the refulgence of the festival yield to a portrayal which is far from being merely a collection of orchestral tricks. The motto of the *Prélude*, after appearing at the end of the *Malaguena*, reoccurs in the middle of this section and hints at a cyclical principle. *Féria* possesses at once the most haunting and exotic passages of the *Rapsodie*. Bewildering devices in orchestral rhetoric are contrasted with simple and unelaborated measures. The middle part, insinuating and voluptuous to a full degree, terminates in the beginning of a powerful *crescendo* which, with increasing emphasis, ends the piece crashingly with *glissandi* by full orchestra, then *fff* chords.

Piero Coppola has managed a good directing job and the recording rises to new "La Voix de son Maître" heights. However, *Féria* will not come out well on a machine other than a large mechanical model or an electrical amplifier because of the heavy *fortissimo* recording.

II

***L'Heure espagnole*.** Musical Comedy in One Act. Words by Franc-Nohain. Music by Maurice Ravel. Performed by Artists of the *Opéra* and the *Opéra-Comique*, Paris, and Orchestra under the direction of M. Georges Truc. Seven 12-inch discs in French Columbia Album (D15149 to D15155 inclusive). Price, complete, \$13.30. Miniature score (orchestra and voice) or piano and vocal score—Durand et Cie, Paris.

In 1907 Ravel was attracted by a farce, from the pen of Franc-Nohain, which had been performed at the *Odéon* without drawing much attention. As the little comedy took his fancy, he set it to music. *L'Heure espagnole* was first performed in 1911 and has since become one of the most brilliantly successful of Ravel's achievements in a light vein. The comedy was particularly suited to his temperament. Franc-Nohain, a pseudonym of Maurice-Etienne Le Grand, was born at Corbigny (Nièvre), October 25, 1873. He is a lawyer and former *sous-préfet* and his literary achievements number some thirty works: plays, essays, novels, etc. *L'Heure espagnole*, as a play, dates to 1905. Its peculiar wit, a queer mixture of poetry and irony, adapted itself to Ravel's music nicely. Ravel revived in this work the old *opéra-bouffe*. The recitative follows the slightest inflection of the speaking voice, while the orchestra emphasizes in an irresistibly comic manner the meaning of the words. The Spanish musical idiom once more tempted Ravel, this time, like Chabrier, he takes it as a magnificent joke. The tale, maliciously delightful, is of libidinous adventure in the Spain of the XVIII Century, and its situations call forth the characteristic Ravellian traits of humor, irony and poetic sentiment. The amusing *L'Heure espagnole*, which in English might be translated either as *The Spanish Hour* or *Spanish Time*, tells how a Toledo watchmaker, called from his shop to regulate the city clocks, leaves a customer, Ramiro (a muledriver), in company with his wife, Concepcion. The flirtatious woman awaiting her lover Gonzalve, keeps the muledriver out of the way by having him carry a large grandfather clock to her room. When Gonzalve (a very poetic youth) arrives, Concepcion hides him in another clock and has Ramiro return the first and deposit this other, with its enclosure, in its place. Gonzalve wastes time poetizing and Concepcion, provoked and impatient, returns to the shop and finds that an unwelcome lover, Don Inigo (a banker) has concealed himself in the first clock.

At last exasperated by Gonzalve's serenading, she has the unsuspecting Ramiro lift the clock containing the stout banker and take that to her chamber, after innocently depositing Gonzalve once more in the shop. Further complications arrive when Don Inigo is unable to extricate himself from his prison. The hour is almost wasted, so when Ramiro, who is naively pleased to work for this charming woman until her husband returns to repair his watch, has carried Don Inigo's clock to its proper place, Concepcion, who has all the while admired his muscular strength, orders him to her room. When the muledriver asks which clock she now wants, Concepcion replies, "*Sans horloge!*" The two go off. The husband enters and is overjoyed to find such worthy customers as Don Inigo and Gonzalve in his shop. Concepcion and Ramiro return, the latter pulls Don Inigo from his tight position in the clock, and then the quintet advances to the front of the stage and sings to the audience about a poet, a ridiculous husband, a coquettish woman, a financier and continues to "*Le Muletier a son tour!*" And a lot of musical fun Monsieur Ravel extracts from it all . . . from the short introduction, with the interloping pendulums tick-tocking monotonously away (one=40, two others=100 and 232 respectively) bells striking the hours, cuckoo clocks singing "characterizing" motif-themes, and musical marionettes adding to the general clock store din; to the final quintet with its ravishing Habanera accompaniment, the musical joker has a great time. Sliding trombones, a rattle of drumsticks, a blast on the tuba, a bottom BB-flat on the bassoon, together with languishing waltzes and tenderly poetic passages, evoke mockingly, but with the greatest artistic taste and instrumental virtuosity, the significance of the farcical text. The singers most of the time merely talk their parts, the orchestra gets on magnificently with the plot. *L'Heure espagnole* is a masterpiece of its kind.

The cast used for the recording performs excellently. Mme. Krieger (soprano) is Concepcion, wife of Torquemada; M. Arnould (tenor) makes a "lyrical" Gonzalve, bachelor and poet; M. R. Gilles (comic-tenor) sings Torquemada, watchmaker of Toledo; M. I. Aubert (baritone) is a virile Ramiro, muledriver; and M. Hector Dufranne (bass), of *Pelléas* fame, makes an excellent Don Inigo, banker. The orchestra is practically the same large combination as that used for *Rapsodie espagnole*. It is balanced perfectly with the voices and the reproduction of both is praiseworthy in every respect. A point of great importance is the fact that this *opéra-bouffe* is gramophonically presented without a single cut from the first note of the brief introduction to the final *glissando*.

III

Bolero. In four parts. Played by the Orchestra "Association des Concerts Lamoureux," Paris. Conducted by Maurice Ravel. Two 12-inch discs (B-90039 and B-90040). Price, \$1.50 each. Miniature score—Durand et Cie, Paris.

In annotating this remarkable composition, which became the most popular novelty played by eight or nine American symphony orchestras this season, we cannot do better than to quote M. Henry Prunières' review of the first performance in Paris, which appeared in *Modern Music*—January-February, 1929: "A masterpiece is just what Maurice Ravel has given us in *Le Bolero*. This may seem too strong a term for a work which its composer appears to consider of no great importance. I would not indeed place it at the level of a ballet like *Daphnis et Chloé*, whose music is much richer. But a masterpiece is essentially a work finished at every point and as perfect as possible. This exactly characterizes *Le Bolero*."

"Ravel, the master worker, loves to triumph over difficulties. He set himself a difficult problem and solved it with astounding ease . . . The problem he set was to repeat a single theme incessantly over a basso ostinato, without the relief of any

trick of development, of any change of rhythm, or of any incidental passage, contenting himself with giving different colors to the motif by the most varied play of instrumentation, thus achieving a sonorous progression uninterrupted until the end.

"He followed this program rigorously. From the beginning, the drum, soon reinforced by a small stopped trumpet, sets the rhythm of the classical bolero. It hammers this out relentlessly to the finale. The flute, the oboe, the saxophone, the English horn, the trumpet, successively take up the theme, a melody of popular appeal, otherwise quite banal. When the composer has used all the individual instruments he employs them in groups so that the swelling sound is graduated in a long crescendo lasting more than twenty minutes.

"Ravel's instrumental art is such that this persistent repetition, always in the same rhythm, always in the same key, with the same motif, produces no monotony. At the conclusion the listener is so firmly established in the tonality that it seems as if it could never change. Just at this moment, however, it does change, in an explosive modulation. The brasses begin to play as a unit, and then the percussive instruments. The music suddenly assumes a tragic color, utterly unexpected, and the work ends in a tornado of sound, which surges up and breaks, leaving the audience literally spellbound by its magic."

The records of *Bolero*, the piece being conducted by the composer, are no less than superb. Truly, a certain amount of inertia is lost, in the piling up of the *crescendo*, by the three side changes; but, nonetheless, one falls in soon enough with the continued $\frac{3}{4}$ time and the constantly reiterated melody. The breaks, in every instance, are satisfactorily accomplished where the melody rests. This is an interesting work to follow with the score, the recording is uncut; one is intrigued by the ingenuity with which M. Ravel manipulates his instruments. The terrific climax comes out well and the ending is achieved with the proper emphasis. The reproduction is full and clear.

ADDITIONAL LATE RELEASES OF RAVEL WORKS

Tzigane—*Rapsodie de Concert pour Violon et Piano*. In two parts. Played by MM. Lucien Schwartz, soloist of the "Concerts Padeloup" and Petitjean, of the "Concerts Lamoureux." One 12-inch disc (French Gramophone W1033). Price, \$2.00.

Nicolette—*Chanson*. One side and *Lisette*—*Chanson Populaire Française* (Harmonization by Vincent d'Indy) One side. Both sung by "Les Chanteurs de Saint-Gervais." (Chorus unaccompanied) One 10-inch disc (French Gramophone P823). Price, \$1.50.

The *Tzigane* was written in 1924. In it Ravel essays the rhapsodic form and the work, as may be expected, exhibits in full fashion the possibilities of fiddling virtuosity. The performers and recording are splendid. Regardless of its being a show piece, it displays Ravel's unerring sense of proportion and is characterized by sharp definition of contour, finish, point and piquancy down to the utmost detail. *Nicolette* is from the group *Trois Chansons* (1. *Nicolette*, 2. *Trois beaux oiseaux de paradis*, 3. *Ronde*) written in 1916. The songs present a mingling of ancient chanson and XX Century audacity in a humorous, sensitive and gay manner.

Remembering—Emmy Destinn

BY

PETER HUGH REED

The untimely death of Emmy Destinn, celebrated Bohemian dramatic soprano, recently, in her native land recalls to mind a brilliant operatic personality. She was born in Prague on February 26, 1878. Her family name was Kittl. From her teacher, Frau Marie Loewe-Destinn, she adopted her stage name, which she was to make truly famous, in grateful memory of her artistic advancement.

Destinn's career was a colorful one, filled from the beginning with artistic achievements. At the early age of twenty she made her debut as Santuzza in the New Royal Opera House, Berlin. Her success there brought her an invitation from Frau Cosima Wagner, three years later, to sing the role of Senta in *The Flying Dutchman* at its first Bayreuth production. She also sang the Forest Bird in *Siegfried* at Bayreuth.

Destinn was much admired in England. Her first appearance there came in 1904 at the famous Covent Garden Opera House in London. The following year when she recreated the namepart of Puccini's revised *Madame Butterfly* she established herself indelibly in the hearts of all opera-goers. So great, in fact, was her triumph in this role, it is said that Londoners held for a long time the erroneous idea that *Madame Butterfly* without Destinn was inconceivable. In 1906, Richard Strauss chose her to create his *Salome* in its Berlin and Paris premiers. Thereafter came her American debut in 1908 at the Metropolitan Opera House, where for nine long seasons she was to remain one of the most highly esteemed artists of the company. Perhaps many remember her initial performance there in the role of Aida, one of the parts in which she was unsurpassed during her regime. The cast that night included Caruso, Homer and Scotti.

Of her Aida, Pitts Sanborn, writing in The New York Telegram at the time of her death, observed: "I have never heard another Aida equal to Destinn in the Nile scene for variety, color, perspective and nuance. In particular, her singing of "O patria mia" was incomparable. The high "C" she took without a trace of effort, and the ascending phrase at the close, with its final high "A," she sang in half voice and with a regal ease—a phrase that costs the average Aida infinite effort and her hearers considerable pain." (Hear her Columbia recording of this aria for a substantiation of this assertion.)

Destinn's triumphs were many. In truth, it may be said that she never undertook a role in which she was not without some degree of artistic success. In Europe she sang the exacting roles of Carmen, Salome, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and Venus in *Tannhauser*, besides the many for which she became famous in America. Among the latter her most eminent successes were as Aida, Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Marta in *Tiefland*, Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Tosca, Margaret in *Les Huguenots*, Leonora in *Il Trovatore*, Amelia in *Ballo in Maschera* and Minnie in *The Girl of the Golden West*. The last she created in its world premier at the Metropolitan Opera in 1910.

Critics have disagreed about Destinn's vocal qualities, although all have been laudatory of her as a talented singer and actress. It has been said that she possessed a voice capable of the subtlest shading and florid brilliance. It has also been observed that she had a thinness of texture in her middle register which when she sang loudly was not appealing in quality. With this we agree. Her high

tones, however, were floated with a clarity and ease which at all times was truly miraculous. Paradoxical as it may seem, these observations are all true. In support of them Mr. Sanborn in his article said: "Destinn possessed a voice of individual and unforgettable timbre. Whether or not there was something unorthodox about her vocal production or, perhaps, some peculiarity of physical structure, the voice never sounded quite normal, except when used mezza-voce in the upper octave. There were times when her medium range turned distressingly 'white.' Her upper tones, however, were always of exceptional purity."

As an actress Destinn was not great, although she was brilliantly dynamic, and for that reason effective in her dramatic scenes. It was a tendency toward sentimentality at times, we believe, which prevented her interpretations from becoming really great ones. As Mr. Sanborn noted: "Often there was something unduly pathetic and tearful about Destinn's treatment of a role. Nevertheless the woman had a streak of savagery in her which came out in certain scenes and which caused her to take possession of the stage like an elemental force." Undoubtedly the reason the critic, W. J. Henderson, called her "the most satisfying Aida after Nodica."

Destinn was a unique personality. It is said "she was famous for her bad taste in dress, for her extravagant generosity, for the richness of her furs and the size of her motor car, for the suits brought against her by tradespeople, and for her voracious appetite."

The fact that Emmy Destinn has joined the "choir invisible" does not mean that she can no longer be heard. During her vocal prime, which was undoubtedly her Metropolitan Opera period of 1908 to 1914, she made many fine recordings. These are still available and they are well worth our efforts to obtain. For those who would cherish lasting souvenirs of this singer, we have selected a short list of her recordings which we believe represents her artistry at its best. They are:

<i>Aida</i> : O patria mia (Verdi)		
Faust: Aria dei Gioielli (Gounod) Lina Cavalieri.....	C-7030M	\$1.50
<i>Cradle Song</i> (Smetana)		
<i>Romance</i> (Wenig-Destinn) In Bohemian.....	V-6087*	4.00
<i>Giocondo</i> : Suicidio (Ponchielli)		
<i>Tosca</i> : Vissi d'arte (Puccini).....	V-6086*	4.00
<i>Il Guarny</i> : Duet. Sung with Caruso		
Duca d'Alba: Angelo casta e bel (Donizetti) Caruso.....	V-6355	2.00
<i>Magic Flute</i> : Pamina's Aria (Mozart).....	V-88510†	4.00
<i>Madame Butterfly</i> : Un bel di (Puccini).....	V-88468†	4.00
<i>Madame Butterfly</i> : Death Scene (Puccini).....	V-91086†	3.00
<i>Pique Dame</i> : Es geht auf Mitternacht (Tschaikowsky).....	V-88518†	4.00
<i>Trovatore</i> : D'amor sull'ali rosee (Verdi).....	V-88557†	4.00
<i>O quand je dors</i> (Liszt).....	V-88568†	4.00

(* Available from Victor Historical Catalogue.)

(† Available on single-face white label pressings by special order only.)

Honegger, Poulenc and Milhaud

RICHARD GILBERT

2. Honegger: *Judith*—*Le Cahier Romand*—*Prélude et Blues*—*Automne*

When one considers the problems Arthur Honegger set for himself, most of all his interest in questions of musical structure and a complex polyphonic style—something quite distinct from harmony and color—it is comparatively easy to see why it was not until his twenty-fifth year that he succeeded in expressing himself convincingly. The masque, *Le Dit des jeux du monde*, written in 1918, when he had attained this age, shows a freedom from the struggles with his technical procedure, and no longer is his imagination subordinated to the considerations of a musical texture. All of Honegger's large works reveal an inclination towards grave and tragic subjects and austere, ample forms. The key-note to appreciation of this young man's music lies in the ability to distinguish the elaborate contrapuntal procession of melodic lines which converge and produce a rich harmonic fabric. Sometimes the result of this method becomes peculiarly harsh or dissonant. Our talk of polyphony brings to mind the aesthetic theories of the recent "back to Bach" group of modernists. While Honegger may more or less be affiliated with these artistic ideals it should be noted that his art bears little relation to the contrapuntal inclinations of the Hindemith crowd across the Rhine. His Swiss blood has encouraged a deep perceptivity for form and structure but, meanwhile, he has not been indifferent to the influence of French harmonic tendencies and the Russian Stravinsky's feeling for orchestral color. *Le Dit des jeux du monde*—scored for string nonet, flute (piccolo), trumpet and percussion—is Honegger's first important work. The string quartet antedated this chamber-orchestral suite and the other compositions mentioned in the previous article follow it.

Le Dit des jeux du monde has not been recorded and it is well to say here that the chamber nature of the group of short pieces would adapt them nicely to a wax permanency. One of the most arresting movements is in the form of a duet between piccolo and percussion. It would fill one side of a disc and should record excellently. Another important unrecorded work of Honegger's is *Horace Victorieux*—*Symphonie mimée* for full orchestra. The work is considered by many to be the crowning achievement of our composer. In addition, the *Sonatas*—works for violin and piano, two violins, etc.—are still untouched by the gramophone.

The principle work of 1925, following the composition of *Pacific 231*, was the incidental music written for the production of *Judith*, the biblical play of René Morax. The *Théâtre du Jorat*, at Mézières, had once before cradled a Honegger attempt at dramatic writing. To the brothers Morax must go the credit for encouraging what was later to become the symphonic psalm *Le Roi David*, and here again, as in the earlier instance, their countryman has bound together the choruses, solo and symphonic passages which were used in the play, has added recitative and scenes of dialogue, and produced an opera which was successfully first performed in Monte Carlo, February 13, 1926. "His music carried the composer into a bold departure from the poetic text and the story is told in four brilliantly painted scenes." Thus Henry Prunières in a report of the first performance. This critic continues, giving us a brief synopsis of the action portrayed in the scenes of *Judith*, "In the first, Judith raises her voice with the other women of Bethulia, supplicating heaven. With the city besieged, on the verge of surrender to the Assyrian, she resolves to seek out Holophernes and plead for her people. In the second, Judith, pausing by a spring, listens hesitatingly to the distant sounds of the enemy's camp.

At her servant's suggestion to go back, she rises and continues her journey. Holo-phernes, with his captains, feasts in his tent. The pleading Judith is ordered in to 'refresh his sight and his mind,' and without protest she submits to his caresses. He sends out his soldiers, turns a deaf ear to her prayers, and growing ever drunker, falls asleep. Judith takes up a sword and closes the tent; her servant outside is startled by a strange sound. There is an impression of terror here which somewhat recalls the cistern scene in *Salome*. Slipping outside, Judith gives the servant a heavy bag and flees with her. Once more among her people, she reveals Holo-phernes' head and incites them to fall on the demoralized foe. From the shadows there bursts a battle chorus, a huge fresco of sound whose vigor is Handelian, a passage which is to be ranked among the best of Honegger's achievements. At the next dawn the women, bearing palms, appear before Judith's house, and enter into a suite of choruses, which, alternating and combining with solo voices, mount crashingly to a climax in a hymn of gratitude from the delivered Israelites." (*Modern Music*, May-June, 1926.)

The most important excerpts from *Judith* have been recorded. The discs listed below under "The Records" have not arrived in America at this writing. They will be adequately reviewed in the next issue of *Disques*.

The five little miniatures, *La Cahier Romand*, are bits from Arthur Honegger's sketch book and were written at intermittent periods between 1921 and 1923. *Romand* pertains to that part of Switzerland where the French language is spoken. The pieces are polytonal in concept. Delicate shading and exquisite harmonic progressions are subtly exposed. The group, certainly not one of Honegger's outstanding collections of piano pieces, is nevertheless a good example of the modern development in piano writing and, with a distinctly classical feeling, the pieces, with their strange dissonances and skips of large intervals, impart a charm that grows tremendously with intimacy.

The *Prélude et Blues* is a recent trifle. Honegger's canonic style becomes a mannerism in the *Blues* part. The attempt at jazz rhythms is not as successful here as in the more spirited *Concertino pour piano et orchestre*. However, it should not be overlooked. It is representative of the mannered writing lately exhibited in the *Partita pour deux pianos*. Both the *Concertino* and *Partita* remain unrecorded.

Honegger has written a number of songs. The several recorded are the outstanding ones among his works in this form. However, it should be noted that

(Continued on page 110)

THE RECORDS

Honegger: *Judith*; *Cantique funèbre* (Soloist: Mlle. Van Hertbruggen) One side and *Invocation, Fanfare et Incantation* (Soloist: Mme. Croiza) One side. (a) *Retour de Judith*, (b) *Cantique de la bataille*. One side and *Cantique de victoire* (Soloist: Mme. Croiza) One side. Performed by Soloists and *La Chorale "Coecilia" d'Anvers et l'Orchestre des Nouveaux Concerts d'Anvers* under the direction of M. Louis de Vocht. Two 12-inch discs (French Columbia D15240 and D15241). Price, \$1.90 each. Miniature score—J. and W. Chester, Ltd., London.

Honegger: *Le Cahier Romand*; *Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5*. Played by Franz Josef Hirt (Piano). One 10-inch disc (Polydor 90026). Price, \$1.25.

Honegger: *Prelude et Blues*. Played by a Quartet of Chromatic Harps. One side. One 12-inch disc (French Gramophone L668). Price, \$1.75.

Honegger: *Automne, tiré des Six Poèmes* (Poems of Appolinaire) One side and *Chanson des Sirènes; Berceuse de la Sirène* (Poem of René Morax) One side. Both sung by Mme. Clare Croiza, mezzo-soprano, with piano accompaniment by Arthur Honegger. One 10-inch disc (French Columbia D13082). Price, \$1.30.



ORCHESTRA

SAINT-SAENS TSCHAI- KOWSKY

V-7200

to

V-7202

Incl.

C-50213D

Carnival of the Animals. (Saint-Saëns.) Five sides and Song Without Words in A Minor. (Tschaikowsky, Op. 40, No. 6.) One side. Played by the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. Pianists: Mary Binney Montgomery, Olga Barabini. Three 12-inch discs enclosed in an album. Victor Set No. 71. Price, \$6.50.

Samson and Delilah: Selections. (Saint-Saëns.) Two sides. Played by the British Broadcasting Company's Wireless Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Percy Pitt. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

Saint-Saëns wrote the *Carnival of the Animals* chiefly for his own amusement and stipulated in his will that it was not to be published until after his death. The work was given a few private performances during his life-time, but it was not until after he died in 1922 that it was heard by the general public. Today it is encountered only infrequently upon symphony programs. The phonograph companies have treated this musical joke more generously. Columbia issued it long before the electrical process came into effect, and sometime ago replaced the acoustical version with an electrically recorded album. Now the Philadelphia Orchestra, having done for the moment with Sousa, devotes its talents to the piece.

Saint-Saëns' humor doesn't sound so droll and fresh as it probably once did, but it is nonetheless still capable of provoking smiles and arousing mild amusement. The animals the composer evokes are not very ferocious or terrifying; they more strongly suggest what is usually on view on most nursery walls, and even, at times, bear a certain resemblance to the sorry and mangy creatures in third-rate circuses. But Saint-Saëns occasionally achieves rather striking and clever characterizations, as in those sections where he permits himself the luxury and pleasure of several well-aimed and nicely timed pokes at pianists and the professors.

The work is divided into the following sections: *Introduction and Royal March of the Lion; Hens and Cocks; Mules; Tortoises; The Elephant; Kangaroos; Aquarium; Personages With Long Ears; Cuckoo in the Woods; Birds; Fossils; The Swan; Pianists; Finale.*

Stokowski's lions march and roar with fine majesty and splendor, and his elephants are properly clumsy and ponderous. His "personages with long ears" bray delightfully, and the familiar *Le Cygne* comes out with fine beauty and grace. The humorous parts of the music are not exaggerated to the degree they are in the Columbia album. All in all, the *Carnival of the Animals* is good for a fairly diverting, though not very exciting, half hour. One of Tschaikowsky's lugubrious sighs occupies the final side of the set, and, needless to say, the orchestra makes the wail an eloquent one.

The *Samson and Delilah* selections, played by the B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra, are well recorded, and the disc is recommended to admirers of the music drama.

R. J. M.

**BACH
CORELLI**

**C-67748D
to
C-67750D
Incl.**

Suite No. 3 in D Major: Overture; Air; Gavotte; Bourée; Gigue. (Bach). Played by the Orchestra of the Brussels Royal Conservatory under the direction of Desire Defauw. Five sides and Sarabande (Corelli) One side. Played by Enrique Fernandez Arbos and the Madrid Symphony Orchestra. Three 12-inch discs enclosed in an album. Columbia Set No. 135. Price, \$6.00.



Miniature score—for the Bach *Suite*—Eulenburg No. 818.

"When Bach went to Cöthen secular instrumental music was only on the threshold of an independent existence. Most German princes had their private orchestra, or Capelle, but instrumental music had for long been under the ban of the Church, the construction and technique of available instruments were little understood, and the possibilities of their combination were hardly explored. Monteverdi (*d.* 1643) in Italy, Purcell (*d.* 1695) in England, Lully (*d.* 1687) in France, had begun to set the orchestra on a course of its own.

"Released from Weimar on 2 December, 1717, Bach hastened to Cöthen, since receiving his appointment in August, he had settled his household" (*J. S. Bach: A Biography* by Charles Sanford Terry, *Oxford University Press*).

Bach received the coveted appointment as Capellmeister to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen on August 5, 1717. Terminating a period which was characterized by the composition of most of the great organ works, Bach was to enter upon a period of activity which among other productions was to bring into being the six Brandenburg Concertos, four Suites of orchestra, of which the present one forms the third, and the first Part of the "Well-tempered Clavier." The *Suite No. 3 in D Major* is the most popular of the four.

The *Overture* has a broad introduction marked *Grave* which leads into a long, highly-developed fugal section *Vivace*. Near the end there is a return to the theme and opening *Grave*—the same material being treated in a slightly different way. The orchestra employed throughout the Suite consists of two oboes, three trumpets, drums and the usual strings. The *Air* is better known as *Air for G String*, but here this immortal melody is heard in its proper context. As originally written, the *Air* has very little to do with the G string, but the theme is the same in all but pitch. *Gavotte*—the time here is as may be expected—four crotchets in a bar—and the phrases all begin on the third beat. There are two *Gavottes* in this movement each with a subsidiary section. Each of these is heard, with repeats, and finally the first and strongest is played straight through to round off the movement. *Bourée*—again in "four time" only faster and beginning on the fourth beat; it is a short vigorous movement. The final *Gigue* is in 6-8 time, and makes a rollicking Finale to the Suite. The recording is complete except that the conventional repeats in the Overture are not observed.

The *Sarabande* by Corelli (1653-1713) is slow, gracious, tranquil and dignified.

The tone of the recording is clear and full and by his excellent treatment of the *Suite in D*, M. Defauw brings to the records an example of perfect Bachian understanding. Some of our highly respected English and American recording conductors would do well to achieve readings of such a degree of purity. Defauw lets Bach speak for himself and does not intrude by emotionalizing or individualizing the interpretation. In other words, the Royal Orchestra gives a straightforward, unembellished and highly enjoyable performance. As do also the Madrid musicians in the exposition of the Corelli work, a thing of limpid beauty.

R. G.



**RIMSKY-
KORSAKOW
GRANADOS**

**C-67751D
to
C-67756D
Incl.**

Scheherazade: Symphonic Suite for Orchestra. (Rimsky-Korsakow.)
Played by Philippe Gaubert and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra.
Eleven sides and
Goyescas: Intermezzo (Granados) One side. Played by Enrique
Fernandez Arbos and Madrid Symphony Orchestra.
Six 12-inch discs enclosed in an album. Columbia Set No. 136.
Price, \$12.00.

Miniature score for *Scheherazade*—Eulenburg No. 493.

There is a subtle and unmistakable aroma of fairy wonderland in most all of Rimsky-Korsakow's music. National subjects inveterably attracted him, and among these always he was most influenced by the folk-tale and subjects of a highly colored imaginative nature. His desire to depict and his consummate artistry in expressive orchestration enabled him to objectify his conceptions in direct and vivid terms. Rimsky had the observant vision of a painter, one who is capable of large decorative forms. His programs are clearly defined and his art is in direct opposition to that of the creator who has to convey some message of subjective exaltation. The musical pictures painted by this highly gifted composer are mostly smiling and sunny frescos. One will look in vain for the realistic sound-painting of a Mousorgsky or the subtle and dreamy impressionism of a Debussy or Roussel. With his descriptive orchestration, representative rather than suggestive or invocative, Rimsky-Korsakow is at his best in the depiction of fanciful landscapes and atmospheric conditions. The sea-music of *Sadko* and *Scheherazade* are expanded canvases of great decorative force. The latter symphonic suite, with its rich array of picturesque fancy and rare sense of color, is a masterpiece of the first order among works of its kind.

The recording of *Scheherazade* by Philippe Gaubert and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra, released by Columbia, is of dubious welcome. There has already been made available on discs Leopold Stokowski's thrilling reading of the suite. Released over three years ago at a time when present standards of recording were scarcely visible, the Philadelphia Orchestra's *Scheherazade* gives us a Sultana much more arresting in her tale-telling than the Parisians'. The Sultan engendered by Stokowski is in reality a stern and forbidding spouse. The motive, appearing in the first few bars on trombones, tuba, strings and lower woodwind, is thunderous indeed. Monsieur Gaubert's introduction lacks the acrimonious command necessary to this motive. However, the delicate theme of the garrulous *Scheherazade*, a melody of strong oriental character, played by the Conservatoire's first violin, is fine in tone though not so delicately spun as in the Victor set. The honors are Stokowski's in every movement except the third: *The Young Prince and the Young Princess*. Here, Gaubert wins by reason of his delicate grace, the finished playing of his woodwinds, the alluring tempo taken, the superlative nature of the reproduction, and the completeness of the movement. (The Victor third movement is cut from page 138 to page 149 of the score, an omission hardly excusable.) *The Festival at Bagdad*; *The Sea*; *The Vessel is Wrecked on a Rock Surmounted by a Bronze Warrior*; *Conclusion*—the tremendous finale of this score is played in second-rate fashion by the Paris orchestra (the movement is cut from page 221 to page 227—an important passage in the denouement of this climatic section). Stokowski's final movement is a thing of fury, a magnificent blending of the strong contrasting orchestra colors in the creation of festival activity, the mighty sea, and the subsequent wreck. Gaubert pushes his vessel about in a tub of quiescent liquid, one feels sharply the impuissance of the Conservatoire Orchestra. The recording throughout the Columbia set is splendid. The woodwinds are superb, the strings weak in

quality. Gaubert's interpretation is generally lacking in the virility and strength needed to put this thrilling poem across. And extremely clear and well-balanced reproduction does not compensate for this deficiency.



The Granados piece is well-played and makes an agreeable twelfth side.

- PROKOFIEFF** { Classical Symphony in D Major, Opus 25. Three sides and
V-7196 { The Love for Three Oranges: Scherzo and March. Played by
and { Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.
V-7197 { Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

Serge Prokofieff is at present undertaking a tour of America, appearing in the roles of pianist, conductor and composer.

The *Symphonie classique*, Opus 25, was composed in 1917 and was first performed at Paris in 1921 under the baton of Mr. Koussevitzky, to whom it was dedicated. The Boston conductor introduced the work to America and it has become a favorite with Boston Symphony patrons. Strangely enough, the symphony has not been published. In this work one will not find the Prokofieff of the *Suite Scythie* or *The Love for Three Oranges*. Instead will be discovered the lover of classic form. In reality, Prokofieff is by nature a classicist. The form here adopted is as clear and uninvolved as either Mozart's or Haydn's, and the spirit enlivening it as spontaneous and sparkling as Mozart's with the added faculty of a roguish wit reminiscent of the jovial Haydn. A modern harmonization will not disdain from entering and a brilliant orchestration stamps the work as XX Century art. Otherwise deep homage is paid to the classics. The very melodies themselves seem to be patterned spiritually on the characteristic themes of Mozart and Haydn. In four movements, *Allegro*, *Larghetto*, *Gavotte* and *Finale—Molto vivace*, the symphony agreeably strikes the ear and will amaze many who expect from Prokofieff only a clashing of tonalities or an interposition of contrapuntal configurations.

The *Scherzo* and *March* are from the instrumental section of the opera which is based on an XVIII Century satirical fairy tale by Carlo Gozzi. Here Prokofieff's feeling for fantasy, his love of irony and his marvellous technique are given full play. The *Scherzo* and *March* are exceptional examples of the Russian's brilliant technique. The interpretation of Koussevitzky is entirely satisfactory and the recording lives up to Victor's previous standards.

- FRANCK** { *Psyché*: No. 4—*Psyché et Eros*. Two sides. Played by the Society
C-D15197 { of Concerts of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels under the
IMPORTED { direction of M. Désiré Defauw.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.90.

César Franck's lyricism, delicate and poetic, is nowhere else so evident as in the suite *Psyché*. The work is really a symphonic poem and was originally written with choral sections separating the movements, of which there are six. These vocal bridges are of so little interest that the work is heard to better advantage as a purely orchestral suite, in which form it is most frequently given. The pieces were written in 1887-88, about the same time as the popular *Symphony in D Minor*.

Psyché is divided into six sections: *The Sleep of Psyché*, *Psyché carried away by the Zephyrs*, *The Garden of Eros*, *Love Scene (Psyché and Eros)*, *Psyché's Suffering*, *The Pardon of Psyché*. The Belgium orchestra proves itself a capable and full-toned organization. M. Defauw contrives a charming interpretation of No. 4 in the suite, satisfying in every respect. The Royal Conservatoire Orchestra is one to be seriously considered among the many recording symphony orchestras.



**MENDELSSOHN
WAGNER**

B-50161

Midsummer Night's Dream: Scherzo (Mendelssohn) Played by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra (sic) under the direction of Arturo Toscanini. Flute solo: John Amans. One side and

Die Walkure: Act 3—Ride of the Valkyries (Wagner) One side. Played by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Willem Mengelberg. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

SMETANA

B-90034

The Bartered Bride: Overture. Two sides. Played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Julius Prüwer. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

Miniature score—Philharmonia No. 72.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOW

V-D1744

IMPORTED

May Night: Overture. Two sides. Played by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

SUPPE

V-36004

Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna: Overture. Two sides. Played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Robert Heger. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

HANDEL

C-L2345

IMPORTED

The Messiah: Pastoral Symphony. One side and Concerto Grosso No. 14: Larghetto and Polonaise. Op. 6. One side. Played by Sir Thomas Beecham and His Symphony Orchestra with Organ. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.90.

The Mendelssohn has been repressed to fill the reverse side of the *Ride of the Valkyries*. The *Scherzo* formerly appeared on B-50074. The Wagner excerpt is released for the first time. Both were evidently recorded three or four years ago when the old New York Philharmonic Orchestra was under Brunswick contract. Neither piece becomes a satisfactory recording.

Julius Prüwer, one of Germany's finest conductors, does a good job of this popular overture. The explicit reading is projected by finely defined registration.

The overture of the second opera from Rimsky-Korsakow's pen is given a splendid reading by the most popular of English conductors. We can bring to mind no one better equipped to play the Russian orchestral magician's music than Albert Coates. He is completely at home in interpretations of this sort. The reproduction is excellent.

Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna is a rousing recording and the best available disc of the piece.

The *Pastoral Symphony*, representing the Shepherds' vigil, is the orchestral interlude in the oratorio following the chorus *For Unto Us a Child Is Born* and preceding the Soprano's recitative *There Were Shepherds Abiding in the Field*. This recording seems to be the same as the one found on Columbia record C-50092D, released domestically a little over a year ago. Interest in this disc will therefore center on the reverse side containing the *Concerto Grosso No. 14*. The work is handled delicately, with the solo group coming out with fine effect. The recording, though not exceptional, is adequate.

**MOUSSORG-
SKY
RIMSKY-
KORSAKOW**
C-67743D

Khovanstchina: Prelude (Moussorgsky) One side and
Flight of the Bumble-Bee (Rimsky-Korsakow) One side. Played
by Sir Hamilton Harty and the Hallé Orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.



Miniature score for *Khovanstchina: Prelude*—Eulenburg No. 841.

"Descriptions of nature are not often found in Moussorgsky; when they appear, they are without exception tone-pictures of striking effect. Two of the loveliest musical landscapes that Moussorgsky has painted are contained in *Khovanstchina*—one is the prelude to the first act; Moussorgsky calls it 'Dawn on the Moskva River.' It consists of five 'melodic variations'—varied no less in their harmony, rhythm, and figures—on a lovely, clear-cut theme of truly national character . . . It is always the same landscape, somewhat melancholy and monotonous, that we see before us, and yet it seems constantly to change its appearance, in accordance with the changing light. It is not (as is so often erroneously supposed) the sunrise that Moussorgsky means to depict in this prelude; the music entirely lacks the pomp and circumstance usually employed for such effects. Nature-painting in Russian art has always a specially intimate character, owing partly to the landscape itself (in which there is really 'nothing to see'), partly to its effect on the thoughts of the beholder, who when he tries to give them artistic expression, usually avoids any striking effects. So, perhaps, ears used to musical colour thickly laid on would find 'nothing to hear' in the prelude to *Khovantschina*; but if you abandon yourself to its beauty, you will learn to understand the charm of a Russian landscape and you will not hesitate to hail this fine piece as one of the greatest achievements in musical landscape-painting" (*Moussorgsky* by Oskar von Riesemann, Alfred A. Knopf, New York).

The *Prelude* and the Rimsky popular bit are played superbly by the Hallé Orchestra, with extraordinarily fine recording making the registration a vivid one.

**BERLIOZ
STRAWINSKY**
C-G67744D
and
C-G67745D

Roman Carnival: Overture (Berlioz). Three sides and
The Fire Bird: Interlude (Berceuse). (Strawinsky). One side.
Played by Gabriel Pierné and Colonne Orchestra, Paris.
Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

Miniature score for *Roman Carnival*—Philharmonia No. 85.

The *Roman Carnival Overture* was composed in 1843 and first performed from manuscript, under Berlioz's direction, at the "Salle Herz" on February 3, 1849. It is based on themes from Berlioz's opera *Benvenuto Cellini* and in the opera it is played usually as an interlude between the first and second act. The work is written in a concise sonata form without a development and the principal subject, stated at the beginning, is taken from the "Chorus of the enchasers and friends of Cellini." It is interrupted at bar nineteen by an *Andante sostenuto* (Love duet between Cellini and Teresa). The subsidiary subject is based on motives taken from the principal subject. After a recapitulation, a long coda, in which the theme of the Love duet takes an important part, brings this rousing overture to a close.

The *Berceuse* is a favorite section from Strawinsky's *The Fire Bird*, which is ever growing in popularity.

The veteran Pierné leads his orchestra in a well-balanced interpretation of both works. Good recording.



BEETHOVEN

PD-66905

to

PD-66908

Incl.

IMPORTED

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Opus 36. Eight sides. Played by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. Four 12-inch discs. Price, complete with album, \$7.50.

Miniature score—Philharmonia No. 8.

This Polydor recording offers a "Second" which is in every respect the most finished and carefully recorded version available to date. Kleiber and the Berlin orchestra give an energetic and robust interpretation.

R. STRAUSS

PD-66887

and

PD-66888

IMPORTED

Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Opus 28. Two sides. Played by Members of the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Richard Strauss. Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$1.50 each.

Miniature score—Philharmonia No. 242.

Till Eulenspiegel is heard so frequently in the concert hall and it is available in so many recorded versions that news of another release of the work is hardly calculated to arouse much excitement. But these Polydor records are so ably turned out, from every conceivable point of view, that they may be offered as outstanding and encouraging examples of what electrical recording, at its best, is capable of. It is doubtful if the tone of a large orchestra has ever been captured with greater resilience and finer balance. The various instruments come out with exquisite clarity and freshness, and the sound of the full orchestra is very nearly perfectly proportioned. Strauss himself conducts, and the care and labor he is said to have devoted to the recording of his great tone poem are gloriously rewarded. Of *Till* itself there is no need here for comment; a more detailed review of the work may be found in the March issue of *Disques*, where the excellent Odeon version was discussed.

TURINA

V-C1747

and

V-C1748

IMPORTED

Danzas Fantásticas. (a) Exaltación. (b) Ensueño. (c) Orgia. Four sides. Played by the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$1.75 each.

Miniature score—Unión Musical Española (J. and W. Chester, Ltd., London).

Joaquin Turina's name has often been associated with that of his countryman Manuel de Falla. They are unquestionably the foremost composers of Spain. Turina has an unmistakable personality of his own. Pedro Morales tells us that "his works vibrate with the vigorous picturesqueness of the landscape, the city and even the spirit of domestic life of Seville."

The domestically released Columbia recording of *La Procepción Rocio* (C-67606D), played by Arbos and the Madrid Symphony Orchestra, introduced this Spanish modernist to American record collectors. Segovia's guitar record of *Fandanguillo* and the lute quartet record of *Fiesta Mora en Tánger*, played by the Aguilars and listed under MISCELLANEOUS in this issue, are also pieces of Andalusian color from the pen of Turina.

The three *Danzas Fantásticas* were first performed by the Philharmonic Orchestra of Madrid in 1920. Goossens, for us the most musicianly and competent of the younger conductors, has put a lot of vigor and precision into what has turned out to be a powerful recording. The *fff* spots register with fullness and evenness. Also, listen to the drum in part two of the *Ensueño*.

CONCERTO



ELGAR

C-L2346

to

C-L2351

Incl.

IMPORTED

Concerto in B Minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 61. Twelve sides. Played by Albert Sammons (Violin) and the New Queen's Hall Orchestra conducted by Sir Henry J. Wood. Six 12-inch discs. Price, complete in album, \$11.40.

These records of the Elgar *Violin Concerto* were given high, perhaps excessive, praise in England, where they were released several months ago. Though it can readily be conceded that there is a certain sense of power, of substance and a persuasive charm about this music, it is difficult to escape the conviction that what Elgar says here has already been said quite satisfactorily before, and with far more originality and eloquence. Elgar's treatment of the violin is brilliant and often poetic, and his scoring is ample, yet sufficiently restrained to be in good taste. The work was first played in London on November 10, 1910, with Kreisler, to whom the work is dedicated, playing the solo part, and Sir Edward Elgar himself conducting. Albert Sammons, the present soloist, reveals a soft, supple tone that is especially gratifying, and he is effectively supported by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra under Sir Henry J. Wood.

LISZT

B-90036

to

B-90038

Incl.

Concerto in E Flat Major. Played by Alexander Brailowsky (Piano) and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Julius Prüwer. Five sides and
Liebestraum (Dream of Love) One side. Played by Alexander Brailowsky (Piano).
Three 12-inch discs enclosed in an album, Brunswick Set No. 18. Price, \$4.50.

Miniature score—Eulenburg No. 710.

The *Concerto in E Flat Major*, the better known of Liszt's two pianoforte concertos, was written in 1848, revised in 1853, and published in 1857. It was first played at Weimar during the Berlioz week, February 16, 1855, with Liszt as soloist and with Berlioz conducting the orchestra. Hanslick cursed the work by characterizing it as the "Triangle Concerto," an appellation brought about by the inclusion in the scoring for the *Scherzo* of a triangle. A prevalent objection to the use of instruments of percussion, in works of symphonic character, in that day brought down on Liszt's head a flood of invectives from the academicians. The work was held to be impossible. Liszt replied, when Pruckner had played to opposition in Vienna (season of 1856-57), with what Mr. Philip Hale has since designated as a "eulogy of the triangle." When it was played again in Vienna by Sophie Menter in 1869 it became a great success and has since held the concert stage. Brailowsky succeeds in rendering his part with brilliance and artistry. Both piano and orchestra are recorded with clarity and a fine degree of volume. The exposition is, on the whole, very satisfactory.



BRAHMS

V-D1746

to

V-D1750

Incl.

IMPORTED

Concerto in B Flat Major, Opus 83. Ten sides. Played by Arthur Rubinstein (Piano) and the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates.
Five 12-inch discs in album. Price, \$10.00.

Miniature score—Eulenburg No. 715.

A span of twenty-two years separates the two piano concertos of Brahms. His first was written in 1858, when he was twenty-five, the second was scored in the early summer of 1880. This second piano concerto was first jestingly announced by Brahms, to Clara Schumann and Elisabeth von Herzogenberg simultaneously, as "quite a little piano concerto, with quite a little scherzo." It is not surprising that this second concerto is more pleasant, warmer and sunnier than Brahms' first essay in the form. His opus 83 came at a time when he had attained a great deal of success, while the *Concerto in D Minor*, Opus 15, composed when Brahms was poor and unknown, was a dismal failure at its first performance in spite of the praise bestowed upon it by Schumann and other outstanding musicians of the day.

The *Concerto in B Flat Major*, by reason of its four movements and closely knit unification of solo instrument and orchestra, has been considered by some to be more of a symphony. The work is, in fact, a piano concerto and symphony in one. The Brahmsian nobility of thought and depth of emotion are as evident here as in any of the symphonies. Never for a moment does the piano part deteriorate to a mere display passage. The piano becomes an important instrument of the orchestra and is treated more as such than as a highly developed solo prominence.

The indefatigable Niemann has observed that Brahms's B flat major Piano Concerto "is one of his laborious artistic feats, one of those works in which the sweat and toil which they cost him are to a certain extent apparent; and it stands in absolutely immense contrast with the piano concertos of Mozart, created with godlike facility and producing, for all their noble content, a divinely light effect—works which our composer wisely and modestly held in extraordinarily high veneration and love, as peerless models for all true concerto-writing." This same biographer of Brahms continues, "The piano concerto as conceived by Mozart and Beethoven is a display of touch (*Anschlagskonzert*), that of Brahms is—at least to a very large extent—a display of sheer dynamics (*Schlagkonzert*)! This B flat major Concerto, in particular, is one which calls for blood and sweat. 'It is decidedly not for little girls,' as the composer once remarked jocularly to young Ella Pancera, when she played it at Vienna with the Philharmonic Orchestra under Hans Richter."

Arthur Rubinstein's rhythmic agility, an asset which makes him such an expeditious interpreter of contemporary Spanish music, serves him well in this work. His playing is distinguished by a brilliant touch and sure-footing all the way through. Occasionally he seems to lose hold of the melodic line. Or is it the fault of the gramophone that melody notes, at times, fail to come out properly? At any rate, Rubinstein's reading of the music shows an envious technique and his playing, however impetuous, wilful or exuberant, is always assured. Coates, we do not believe to be a good Brahms conductor. His fortes are too strong and, in the third movement, the solo 'cello displays a rather harsh tone. Coates does a good thing by taking a *largamente* at the beginning of the second section of the second movement, instead of the *andante* so frequently allowed.

The recording rises to fine standards of concerto registration.

CHAMBER MUSIC



HARSANYI
C-D15198
to
C-D15201
Incl.
IMPORTED

Quatuor à Cordes. Eight sides. Played by the Roth Quartet.
Four 12-inch discs. Price, \$1.90 each.

Miniature score—La Sirene Musicale, Paris.

STRAWINSKY
C-D15182
IMPORTED

Three Pieces for String Quartet. Two sides. Played by the
Krettly Quartet. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.90.

Miniature score—Universal Edition, Vienna.

The search for the philosopher's stone, since the bankruptcy of the nineteenth century, has led to a lively find of doctrines. How long any one of these will last or what mutation will produce *the* guiding principle is not the question, for happily each doctrinaire has found his, to be sure, and the onlooker can afford to wait. But all intellectual pursuits taken together represent a Casino where the gamble for standards goes on feverishly and the invisible Bank will not be broken. At the Esthetic table Vernon Lee uses counters of psychological data, Prof. Babbitt will sell you a System of Humanism, T. S. Eliot backs St. Thomas Aquinas, someone else, the age of Pericles and H. L. Mencken doesn't play for such high stakes.

The practice of Art presents the same general variety. In music, the neo-classical economy of Hindemith, Copland, and to some extent Stravinsky and Casella; the Mozartian imitations of Prokofieff; the atonal group under Schönberg—which has perhaps the most consistent esthetic—see their problem with a more radical bias from those, like Malipiero, whose break is with some particular feature of past practice,—the development section—for instance. Opposed to these two classes are musicians like Haba and Carrillo, who believe that a new esthetic demands a new technology: an extension of the limits of the scale and instruments for quarter tones, sixteenths of tones.

These are lively enough shows or side-shows and mergers are affected through those who would carry on the heritage of culture and, at the same time, take advantage of what is attractive in new ideas:—Pizzetti, Honegger, and Tibor Harsanyi, whose string quartet is a perfect example of the work of an eclectic.

The usual sources thus far have yielded no information concerning Harsanyi*; and that is too bad, for he is an unusually fine musician. The quartet was published in 1928 and has no identification other than a dedication to the Roth Quartet who perform it. It is in four movements, never dull for a moment, and, by its synthetic technic, extremely pleasant to listen to. For, as it does not deny classic tradition, the demands made on the listener are not so trying as are more individual conceptions. Yet the modern freedom of harmonic treatment, the use of "effects," of *contretemps* in rhythm and strongly contrasting keys in the figuration (there is no key signature on account of the constant change of key—but there is tonality nevertheless) render the work palatable to the modern romantic.

*(Editor's Note: See, on page 111, under CORRESPONDENCE, letter regarding Tibor Harsanyi.)



There is no development in the traditional sense of analysis and discussion; there is rather a series of episodes, transformations of the theme whereby the composer shows the variety latent in his humble material. A simple theme and variations is what it amounts to. But that is what all music is, when it is not two themes with variations. Here the blossoming of the theme is quite charming and withal solid: elves flit about—quite elfishly, too; high-coiffed ladies minuet with periwigged partners; peasants do amazing steps; and Bach is in their midst fuguing away. A strange party! The musician will be baffled for a tag. Now it is Debussy, now Schönberg, now Strawinsky, now the classic worthies. We must derive what critical satisfaction we can from the word eclectic.

The score is devilishly difficult. But there never was a better ensemble than the Roth, and few as good. Even—and it is perhaps the only time I have known it to be true—the second fiddler is first-rate. Harsanyi knew what he was about when he dedicated the work to this group. Their performance, as well, is a dedication.

II

Trois pieces pour quatuor à cordes. These three short pieces are dated 1914. The first is oriental in character and consists of a strongly accented dance figure in a range of four notes, G to C, lasting four measures, and given to the first violin. The other three voices are the accompaniment, one sustaining a pedal point, the two remaining ones beating a rhythm rhapsodically. With a slight variation, the pattern is repeated some fifteen times to the end. As musical naturalism, it is an effective setting down of a folk ritual.

The third number is reflective and interesting harmonically. There you may hear Strawinsky's fondness for the diminished prime and chords in duple key half tones apart.

The peculiar genius of Strawinsky, however, is fulfilled in the second piece. For sheer sound effects that is a sensation. With just dried gut and horsehair as his means he seems to reproduce the yelpings of a dog pack and the love-life of cats. There are no program notes, but none are necessary. The sonority is unmistakable.

The resources of the strings are exploited to the utmost. The players draw the bow on the fingerboard, perform glissandi, harmonics, jumping bow, plucking and bowing at the same time, drop the instruments from under the chin to between the legs for an inverse arpeggio . . . Imagine Kreutzer's "Studies for the Violin" with an exercise on playing upside down! The Krettly quartet respond gallantly, however, and the composer realizes perfectly his great tonal conceit.

Joseph Cottler.

PIZZETTI

C-D14556

and

C-D14557

IMPORTED

Tre Canti ad una Giovane Fidanzata. Three sides and
Aria (D Major) One side. Played by A. Poltronieri (Violin)
and I. Pizzetti (Piano). Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$1.90 each.

Ildebrando Pizzetti visited America for the first time during the past February and March. Toscanini conducted the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra in the world premier of his *Rondo Veneziano* February 27th, on which occasion the composer was present. Pizzetti is considered by some to be the most individual and thoughtful Italian composer of the present time. His music is as different from that of his celebrated countrymen, Casella, Malipiero and Respighi, as theirs

is, in turn, apart from each other. He studied at the Parmese Conservatorio. He is known in this country chiefly for his opera *Fra Gherardo* which was performed last season at the Metropolitan.



The contents of *Tre Canti ad una Giovane Fidanzata* (Three Songs to a Young Sweetheart) are interesting. The first movement, as its title suggests, *Affettuoso*, is tender and affectionate. The second is slower and is called *Quasi grave e commosso*, it continues the mood of the first section. *Appassionato*, the third movement is more exalted in feeling. All three sections are characterized by a strong individual fancy and considerable resource of technical means. Signor F. Bonavia tells us that the sonata is an excellent example of an art which is national only in so far as it reflects the intense melancholy of the true Italian folk-song. *Tre Canti* is an interesting work, well-recorded, and, as the composer plays in it, may be considered given an authoritative interpretation.

MENDELSSOHN

V-C1672
to
V-C1675
Incl.
IMPORTED

Octet in E Flat Major. Op. 20. Played by the International String Octet. Four 12-inch discs. Price, \$1.75 each.

Miniature score—Eulenburg No. 59.

With the composition of the *Quintet in A*, the *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture*, and the *Octet*, Mendelssohn was launched upon the world, at the age of 17, as a thoroughly original composer. Very little of his excellent chamber music has been recorded. Mendelssohn's great works in this field are on a par with those for the orchestra although the accusation has sometimes been made that they are more fitted for the orchestra than the chamber. To some extent this charge is well-founded. Mendelssohn virtually anticipated it in his preface to the octet, which he desires to be played in symphonic style. The eight-part writing is admirable. The recording of this work should be welcomed heartily by all Mendelssohnians, for the reproduction is good and the performance extraordinarily fine. The *Scherzo* of the *Octet* is a thrilling piece of brisk writing. But at that, all of Mendelssohn's scherzos are gripping. The work is completely recorded.

HAYDN

C-9777
and
C-9778
IMPORTED

Quartet in G Major. Op. 76, No. 1. Four sides. Played by Poltronieri String Quartet. Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$1.50 each.

Miniature score—Eulenburg No. 69.

This quartet was formerly available in the three record (five sides) version by the Budapest String Quartet (V-D1075 to V-D1077). We prefer the playing of the Budapest ensemble to the present interpretation. But, the recording here is distinctly better and, as the record sides have been more completely filled, the uncut work is more convenient on four sides.



PIANO

CHOPIN

V-DB1343

to

V-DB1346

Incl.

IMPORTED

Four Ballades. (a) Ballade in G Minor, Opus 23. (b) Ballade in F Major, Opus 38. (c) Ballade in A Flat Major, Opus 47. (d) Ballade in F Minor, Opus 52. Eight sides. Played by Alfred Cortot (Piano).

Four 12-inch discs enclosed in album. Price, \$10.00.

The selection of Cortot for this recording of the imperishable *Ballades* was a splendid choice. One hopes that our own Victor will not record the same works by another pianist but will eventually repress the H.M.V. discs for American general distribution. The four are here recorded, two for the first time, and enshrined in the handsome green "His Master's Voice" album.

For extremely adequate appreciations of Chopin's *Ballades*, we refer the reader to Mr. Frederick Niecks' excellent biography, *Frederick Chopin, as Man and Musician*, Novello and Company, London, and to James Huneker's *Chopin*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

In all four works there are unmistakable attempts at programme writing. That Chopin had definite literary and poetic ideas there can be no doubt. The information which he imparted to Schumann concerning the Mickiewicz poems that inspired the compositions is of little assistance in finding a definite programmatic significance, for no particular poems were mentioned. Perhaps it is best, for with our free imaginations we will be able to create from the romantic working out and the nobility of the offering a concoction measured by our own sensitiveness. For the musician and particularly for the pianist there is that building up of compact structures glowing with genius and presenting a definite unification of figures and expressive forms; as in all great art there is an unavoidable feeling for organic unity.

"Unfortunately the *Ballades* exist in a medium always the most difficult to reproduce with adequacy. But that must be accepted as it is. Cortot provides readings that are properly poetic. There is a slight untidiness that surprises one when listening to an artist of this quality. But the impetuous moments are excellent." Thus the gramophone critic, Sc.G., writing in the April number of *Music and Letters*.

MEDTNER PROKOFIEFF

V-1449

Fairy Tale (in E Minor) Op. 34, No. 2 (Medtner) One side and Suggestion Diabolique (Prokofieff) One side. Both played by Benno Moisevitch (Piano). One 10-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

The Medtner opus is, to our knowledge, the only recording of a work by this sadly neglected genius of keyboard composition. Will not the Victor Company have Rachmaninoff record a Medtner Sonata? Particularly as Medtner is touring America this season and also for the reason that many requests have been made for recordings of the Russian musician's works. A most significant contemporary composer!

The Prokofieff piece is fantastic and effective. It is No. 4 of Opus 4, although not so designated on the label.

Moisevitch is a thoroughly competent musician, one of the very finest, and plays both pieces beautifully.

GRIEG

C-67746D
and
C-67747D

Ballade in G Minor, Opus 24. Four sides. Played by Leopold Godowsky (Piano). Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.



Here is a piano reproduction of the very best. And what an *artist* recording! Not satisfied to occupy a place in the first rank of contemporary musicians, Godowsky seems to continually strengthen that position as well. We might say that his recording of the Grieg *Ballade*, together with his Chopin *Nocturnes* album, make documents of the greatest importance in rendering permanent a record of a great pianist's art.

As for the music presented, we shall confine our remarks to saying only that the *Ballade* is typical of all that is good and bad in Grieg's work. What a far cry this piece is from the heritage Chopin has left to us in the same form! And how well Debussy typified the Norwegian's music by stating that it gives us "the charming and bizarre sensation of eating a pink bon-bon stuffed with snow." Grieg escapes this quality only when he is given to technical verbosity, not a little of which occurs in this work. It is for this last reason that the *Ballade in G Minor* has been more admired by professional pianists than by the general musical public. Nonetheless, the work is an excellent vehicle for the display of Godowsky's genius and the records should be desired by all those interested in his amazing artistry.

ORGAN



MOZART

PD-95290
IMPORTED

Sonata in C Major for Organ and String Orchestra; Second Movement. Two sides. Played by Gerhard Bunk (Organ) and Orchestra School of the Municipal Conservatory, Dortmund, conducted by Paul van Kempen. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

Mozart wrote seventeen Sonatas for organ and accompaniment for performance as detached instrumental pieces to be played as introductions or intermezzi during the pauses in divine service. They were written in the then customary symphony form; music of a lively and secular tone not being thought out of place in churches. Some of the Sonatas were written for an accompanying orchestra of violins, bass and trumpets or for violins, violoncellos, bass, oboes, trumpets and kettledrums; others, for purely string accompaniment. The works were after the fashion of the first movement of a Sonata, without trace of ecclesiastical severity, either in the technical construction, which is very light, or in the style, which is brilliant and cheerful. The *Sonata in C Major* is either No. 328 or No. 336 in Kochel's list. Both numbers are in the key of C Major. It was composed about 1780 when Mozart was twenty-four years old. The movement here recorded is characterized by beautiful subjects which are treated freely and skillfully. The organ part is not ever in obbligato, as may be supposed, but is treated sometimes as an accompaniment to the 'cellos, sometimes it is independent, but its prominence is very modest, and it never aspires to solo passages or simular extensions. The Polydor recording is fine and the playing is Mozartean and satisfactory. Have no hesitancy in adding this disc to your Mozart collection.



WIDOR
C-2153D

Symphony No. 5: Toccata. Two sides. Played by Edouard Commette. Recorded in St. Jean's Cathedral, Lyons, France. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

VIERNE
V-22287

First Symphony: Finale. Two sides. Played by Fernando Germani on the New York Wanamaker Auditorium Organ. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

BACH

V-D1765
and
V-D1766

IMPORTED

Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor. Four sides. Played by Marcel Dupre on the Organ of Queen's Hall, London. Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

Charles Widor, one of the greatest French organists and composers, was born at Lyons in 1845. He is still living. The *Symphony No. 5* belongs to his Opus 42. The title "symphony" is rather inappropriate for in reality the work is more in the form of a suite. The *Toccata*, as a piece for showing off the technique of the performer, makes severe demands on the resources of both player and instrument and, it is a pleasure to say, Commette does excellently by the work. The *Toccata* is in the form of a constantly recurring figure over a bass pedal which undergoes a series of constantly varying modulations. Good organ recording and a low priced class make this disc one of especial interest.

The Vierne work is a recording of a superlative nature and one to be welcomed, inasmuch as Louis Vierne is the present dean of French organist-composers. The *First Symphony*, Opus 14, has a finely wrought finale which is here splendidly interpreted by the Italian executant.

The *Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor* belongs to the Weimar period (1708-17) and has been said to sum up all the philosophy of Bach's second period, when he was Hof-Organist and Kammer-Musikus to the reigning Duke Wilhelm Ernst. This period was fertile in the production of the masterpieces which were epoch making in the history of organ music. The *Passacaglia* is complete on the first disc, the *Fugue*, on the second. The playing of Marcel Dupre is praiseworthy. The reproduction of the organ rises to the latest standards, though, in some spots a slight surface noise prevails. This is the only recording of the great work.



VIOLIN

ELMAN
WAGNER-
WILHELMJ
V-7195

Tango. (Elman.) One side and
Album Leaf—Romance. (Wagner-Wilhelmj). One side. Both
played by Mischa Elman (Violin) with piano accompaniment
by Josef Bonime. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

The Elman *Tango* is a languorous, pleasing piece, not differing essentially from the general run of such things. What the label calls *Album Leaf—Romance* turns out to be the *Albumblatt in C* for piano which Wagner wrote in 1861 for Princess Metternich. The effective arrangement for the violin was made by Wilhelmj, one of the outstanding violinists of the past century. Both works are done deftly, and with a full, glowing tone that the recording shows to fine advantage.

VIOLONCELLO



**HURE
SULZER**

C-50214D

Air. (Hure.) One side and
Sarabande. (Sulzer.) One side. Both played by W. H. Squire
(Violoncello) with organ accompaniment.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

Good 'celloing by an English virtuoso.

OPERA



GOUNOD

C-50212D

Faust: Il était un Roi de Thulé (A King There Was in Thulé)
One side and
Faust: Air des bijoux (Jewel Song) One side. Both sung by
Yvonne Gall (Soprano) with Orchestra under the direction of
Elie Cohen, Chef d'Orchestre, Opéra-Comique, Paris.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

**VERDI
BELLINI**

V-7198

Falstaff: Sul Fil d'un Soffio Etesio (From Secret Caves and
Bowers) Act 3 (Verdi) One side. Sung by Toti Dal Monte
(Soprano) with Members of Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala,
Milan, conducted by Carlo Sabajno.
La Sonnambula: Ah! Non Credea Mirati (Could I Believe) Act
3 (Bellini) One side. Sung by Toti Dal Monte (Soprano)
with Members of Orchestra of La Scala, Milan, conducted by
Carlo Sabajno. Recorded in Europe.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

**PONCHIELLI
DONIZETTI**

V-7194

La Gioconda: Cielo e Mar (Heaven and Ocean) Act 2 (Pon-
chielli) One side and
L'Elisir d'Amore: Una furtiva Lagrima (Elixir of Love—A Fur-
tive Tear) Act 2 (Donizetti) One side. Both sung by Benia-
mino Gigli (Tenor) with Orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

**BELLINI
VERDI**

C-50211D

Norma: High on that Mountain (Bellini) One side and
Il Trovatore: Two Fair Children (Verdi) One side. Both sung
by Tancredi Pasero (Bass) with Chorus and Orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

Paris knows its *Faust* and Mlle. Yvonne Gall has long been a favorite Marguerite at both the *Opéra-Comique* and the *Opéra*. This record, taken from the French Columbia Blue Label series and repressed in America for the popular priced series, reveals a voice of exquisite loveliness in renderings of the favorite arias from the third act. The simple old song which tells the time-honored legend of the faithful king of Thulé and his golden goblet is followed by the brilliant "Jewel Song." In comparing Mlle. Gall's singing with other recorded versions of these arias



(Maria Kurenko on C-50121D; Edith Mason, B-50080; and the lately released Rethberg disc, V-7179), we are more than tempted to select the present disc as a truer and more musicianly finished achievement. The orchestra is a large one and the important accompaniment is handled artistically by M. Cohen, a most capable operatic director. Yvonne Gall is well-known to patrons of the Chicago Opera Company, having sung with that company a repertoire which included *Le Chemineau*, *L'Heure espagnole*, *Le Tabarro* and *La Jacquerie*.

Toti Dal Monte is *superb* in the arias from *Falstaff* and *La Sonnambula*. Verdi's last opera is without doubt the greatest of Italian comic operas. Abandoning the sensuous and dominant Italian melody, Verdi developed every kind of recitative to the utmost. It has been said that *Falstaff* can still teach something to composers who have definitely given up the school of Wagner. The coupling from Bellini's opus is an example of splendid singing. The choral and orchestral parts of both sides are competently performed.

Mr. Gigli's singing, on his records at least, is always characterized by luscious tonal quality and complete command of operatic style. Yet, there is his usual inclination towards the lachrymose.

Tancredi Pasero, with the Metropolitan earlier in the season, gives mediocre interpretations to the Bellini and Verdi arias. He is not assisted much by chorus or orchestra, both being hardly up to the ordinary standards.

WAGNER
V-D1723
and
V-D1724
IMPORTED

Tristan und Isolde: Act 2—Love Duet. Four sides. Sung by Frida Leider (Soprano) and Lauritz Melchior (Tenor) with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra and the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates.
Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

These two discs, for a few all too brief moments, come pleasurably close to achieving that "very nearly ideal" Tristan and Isolde Lawrence Gilman once hinted might some day be possible by means of the gramophone. They are so high in quality of performance and recording, indeed, that the only serious criticism that may be made of them is that they are cut, a fault they share in common with the vast majority of stage performances. A more complete, but less thrilling, Love Duet is to be found in the Bayreuth Festival Albums.

Tristan and Isolde are far removed from the conventional opera lovers, striking absurd poses and singing grandly of their tawdry passion. Wagner's characters are thoroughly human beings, consumed with a desire doomed from the start to a tragic outcome, and so to make them intelligible in the wider significance calls for talents considerably above those possessed by the ordinary opera singer. Lauritz Melchior and Frida Leider could not readily be improved upon. They get into their singing a good bit of the ecstasy, the anguish, the pathos, the torment, the impatience and the rapture that Wagner poured so liberally and skillfully into his incomparable score; and they do it with superb feeling and restraint.

Beginning at the point where Isolde summons Tristan by extinguishing the torch, the music continues, with the usual cuts, to the entry of King Marke. Coates provides, with the assistance of the London Symphony and Berlin State Opera Orchestras, a swiftly moving and eloquent orchestral accompaniment. As in most Wagnerian recordings, the orchestra speaks with too modest and subdued a voice, but this is only a minor criticism, one easily forgotten in view of the many other excellencies possessed by the records.

**MOZART
WAGNER**

B-50162

The Magic Flute: Act II—Within this hallowed dwelling. (Mozart.) One side and

Das Rheingold: Scene IV—Golden at eve the sunlight gleams. (Wagner.) One side. Both sung by Michael Bohnen. (Bass.) One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.



Splendid singing by one of the best bassos. However, here, as in former Bohnen recordings released by this company, the orchestra is a small studio ensemble which does little justice to either Mozart's or Wagner's scoring.

VOCAL



**PURCELL
MENDELSSOHN**

**V-D1567
IMPORTED**

Dido and Aeneas: When I Am Laid In Earth. (Purcell.) One side and

Elijah: O Rest in the Lord. (Mendelssohn.) One side. Both sung by Leila Megane (Contralto) with Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

Miniature score for *Dido and Aeneas*—Philharmonia No. 415.

Dido and Aeneas is Purcell's greatest piece of vocal declamation and was written around 1688-90. In the paper on this great English musician in *Grove's* there is remarked that "Whatever Purcell writes for the voice, from the most artless melody, tavern song or catch to the most elaborate piece of vocalisation such as this (*Dido*), has behind it the sure instinct of the singer. It was this singer's instinct which made Purcell the greatest master of the ground-bass used as a song form." With Henry Purcell, English music reached its peak of artistic significance. He was born 1658-59 and died 1695. This recording brings to the gramophone treasury the only disc containing *Dido and Aeneas* music. Why did "His Master's Voice" couple the beautiful song, *When I Am Laid in Earth* with another *O Rest in the Lord* of Mendelssohn? Surely, a coupled song or aria from *Dido* would not have diminished the record's sales value. Leila Megane does beautifully by the text and the fine accompaniment comes out splendidly played by an adequate orchestra. The score used is undoubtedly that published by the Musical Antiquarian Society of London and newly edited and orchestrated by Artur Bodansky. The entrance of the voice does not begin with the labeled air but with the recitative preceding it: "Thy Hand, my Anna; darkness shades me, On thy bosom let me rest: more I would, but death invades me. Death is now a welcome guest." Then the song begins: "When I am laid, am laid in earth, may my wrongs create no trouble, no trouble in thy breast. Remember me! Remember me! but ah! forget my fate. Remember me, but ah, forget my fate!" The words of this tragic opera in three acts are by Nahum Tate. The overture, thirty-eight bars of beautiful and typically Purcellian music, certainly should be recorded, as well as other excerpts: songs, choruses, songs with choruses, airs, etc., and a Dance, at the end of Act 2, of twenty-some measures. This record is most welcome and should find much support from those to whom the Golden Age of English music means anything.

After being fascinated by this bit of antiquity, one hardly cares to mention the more modern and familiar Mendelssohn, except that it is sung with equal artistry.



**KOENEMANN
POUSHKIN-
RIMSKY-
KORSAKOW**
V-7199

When the King Went Forth to War. (Koenemann.) One side and
The Prophet. (Poushkin-Rimsky-Korsakow, Op. 49.) One side.
Sung by Feodor Chaliapin (Bass) with Orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

These songs, both sung in Russian, appear frequently on Chaliapin's recital programs. *When the King Went Forth to War* is martial in character and relates the wide difference between the homage accorded a King and the lack of it given a common soldier in time of war. The Rimsky-Korsakow song is not lacking in distinction, and is reflective in mood. Chaliapin sings with his customary drama and vigor, and he is ably supported by an efficient orchestra.

ARNOLD
C-2141D

Flow Thou Regal Purple Stream. (Arnold.) One Side and
Early One Morning. (Traditional Air.) One side. Sung by
Alexander Kisselburgh (Baritone) with piano accompaniment.
One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

No word list is needed to help distinguish the text of these songs. Kisselburgh's enunciation coupled with perfect recording enables one to follow distinctly two very good songs. *Early One Morning* is an extremely exquisite traditional air. The piano accompaniment is very interesting. A wonderful record to be found in the low price class.

**DVORAK
TREVALSA-
BARR**
C-2154D

Songs My Mother Taught Me. (Dvorak.) One side and
My Treasure. (Trevalsa-Barr.) One side. Both sung by Louis
Graveure (Tenor) with piano accompaniment by Walter Golde.
One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

The former baritone uses his newly acquired upper register to advantage in recording these songs.

**BACH
GLUCK**
PD-66924
IMPORTED

Hark to the Soft Chorus of Flutes. (Bach.) Sung by Hedwig
von Debicka (Soprano) with orchestra conducted by Julius
Prüwer. One side and
O del Mio Dolce. (Gluck.) Sung by Hedwig von Debicka
(Soprano) with piano accompaniment by Julius Prüwer.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

Von Debicka's voice is a great one and both lovely arias are recorded superbly. A slight echo prevails in spots, due, no doubt, to the acoustical properties of the hall in which the works were recorded. The accompaniment is well-balanced. This disc should become a favorite.

**HANDEL
R. STRAUSS**
V-D1632
IMPORTED

Josua: O had I Jubal's Lyre. (Händel.) Sung by Elizabeth
Schumann (Soprano) with Members of the Vienna State Opera
Orchestra and piano accompaniment by Karl Alwin. One side
and
The Three Holy Kings from an Eastern Land. (R. Strauss.)
One side. Sung by Elisabeth Schumann (Soprano) with the
Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Karl Alwin.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

The Händel selection is familiar. We cannot find a listing of the Strauss opus. It is not representative of his best works in the form.

CHORAL



BANTOCK

C-9894
IMPORTED

The Pilgrim's Progress: (a) In Praise of Famous Men. (b) The Pilgrim Now Hath Found His Lord. (Words by John Bunyan, adapted by B. Andrews). Two sides. Both sung by the National Choir with the B. B. C. Wireless Symphony Orchestra conducted by Stanford Robinson. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

Granville Bantock's setting of a metrical version of passages from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* was first given in the Queen's Hall, London, in November, 1929. Two of the best choruses are recorded on the above disc. Excellent recording prevails, with fine balance between chorus and orchestra.

BACH

PA-E10917
IMPORTED

Passion According to St. John—Ach Herr, lass dein lieb Engelein (O Lord, let Thine Angel). Lässest du diesen los (If thou let this man go). Weg, Weg, mit dem (Away with him; Away with him!) Sung by the Choir of St. William's, Strasbourg, with organ accompaniment. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.60.

Miniature Score: Eulenberg No. 965.

For the benefit of those who follow the score, the *Coro: Lässest du diesen los*,—begins on page 106; it is followed by the recitative and *Coro: Weg, weg mit dem*,—on page 112, it is given a beautiful and satisfying rendering. *Ach Herr, lass dein lieb Engelein* . . . is the final *Chorale* of the Passion and together with the choruses the record contains some of the greatest and loveliest passages from the work.

DEBUSSY

C-D19215
IMPORTED

Dieu! Qu'il fait bon regarder! One side and Yver, vous n'êtes qu'un villain. Both sung by La Chorale "Coecilia" d'Anvers under the direction of M. Louis de Vocht. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$1.00.

Trois Chansons (Charles, Duc d'Orleans). Quand j'ai oui le tabourin (for contralto solo with choral accompaniment) the second of the group remains unrecorded. The group was written in 1908.

These four-part pieces are imbued with the spirit of Palestrina, Monteverdi, Vittoria and Orlando di Lasso by reason of their use of medieval modes, a procedure not at all uncommon with the author of the epochal *Pelléas*. Debussy's devotion to the Middle Ages was not a slavish one. He was a medievalist only so far as he was able to pervade his music with a freedom and freshness obtained by an appreciative realization of the natural and unaffected beauty of what he likes to call the "divine arabesque"; that principle of ornament which is the basis of all forms of art. The primitives, Debussy tells us, made use of this divine arabesque; they discovered the principle in the Gregorian chant, and they strengthened the delicate traceries by strong counterpoint. The two part-songs made of the poems of Charles take us back to a state of innocence, a feeling of absolute purity and limpidity.

The choral body performing the pieces sing with sympathetic understanding for dynamic treatment, balance and nuance. The recording is nearly perfect.

Three Volumes of Music and Humor

There are some people for whom music is only a serious, solemn art . . . they will be given a most delightful surprise on listening to the three new albums of records just released by Victor.

Saint-Saëns' Carnival of the Animals. Played by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Three twelve-inch records in Album M-71 (Nos. 7200-7202) and in automatic sequence, AM-71 (Nos. 7203-7205). List Price, \$6.50.

Saint-Saëns' delightful work holds almost a unique place in the field of music . . . it has caused even the most dignified of Symphony concert audiences to laugh with genuine and spontaneous mirth! The sub-title, "Grand Zoological Fantasia" gives a clue to its character. Heard after the realistic "Personages with Long Ears" and the crackling satire of "Fossils" the well known "Swan" takes on a new and unsuspected loveliness. The Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski enter thoroughly into the comic spirit and interpret it with great vivacity and brilliance.

Selections from the Repertoire of Yvonne Printemps and Sacha Guitry. On five Victor records in Album C-8 (Nos. 4181-4182, 9643-9645). List Price, \$6.50.

Many of the countless Americans who visit Paris every year have been delighted by the inimitable charm of these famous actors; many more have heard them upon their visit to the United States. These records of some of the "big" scenes chosen from their most successful operettas, "Mozart," "Deburau," "Marianne," "L'Amour Masqué," are captivating with a suave humor . . . typically French. The songs represent those masters of this genre, Andre Messager, Reynaldo Hahn, and Oscar Straus, in their most delightful and melodious vein, and the sophisticated dialogue as interpreted by M. Guitry and his charming wife, Yvonne Printemps, is a model of the most exquisite and perfect French diction.

The Music of Rudolf Friml. Played by Nat Shilkret and the Victor Salon Group and Victor Salon Orchestra on five twelve-inch Victor Records in Album C-9 (Nos. 9649-9653). List Price, \$7.50.

Rudolf Friml has kept us busy humming and whistling his melodies ever since he came here from his native Bohemia some twenty years ago. First he set the country singing his "Sympathy" in "The Firefly," and soon after started the nation's ears a "tingle-ingling" with his "High Jinks." He has continued pouring forth a seemingly inexhaustible supply of melody and rhythm, in "Katinka," "You're in Love," "Rose-Marie," "The Vagabond King," and "The Three Musketeers." The records in this album are from these operettas and include those memorable tunes that are perennial delights . . . some of them sung in the original vocal form, others in instrumental arrangements. The voices are excellent, the orchestra, Nat Shilkret's at its best . . . no other commendation is necessary. As an added attraction, the composer, who is also a brilliant concert pianist, plays two of his own piano compositions.



Victor Division
R C A VICTOR COMPANY, Inc.
Camden, New Jersey

MISCELLANEOUS



TURINA CROFT

V-9397

{ Fiesta Mora en Tánger (Turina—Arr. Aguilar) One side and
Allemande (Croft) One side. Both played by the Cuarteto Aguilar
(Aguilar Lute Quartet.) Recorded in Europe.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

The Aguilar Lute Quartet of Madrid is composed of Francisco, José, Elisa and Ezequiel Aguilar. This unique ensemble, from Spain, made its American debut at Town Hall, New York City, during the past fall. The American public does not know a lot about lutes but once they were introduced to the Madrid combination the most skeptical were charmed by such virtuosity, and especially on instruments no longer in use or only known by a sort of inferior cousin, the college mandolin. Arnold Dolmetsch, the instrument antiquarian, knows about lutes but has never, with his family, made a point of featuring the instrument. Ezequiel Aguilar explains that "the lute is not, of course, a native Spanish instrument. It was brought into Spain by the Moors in the Eighth Century, just as England got it from the Saracen races during the Crusades three centuries later. The English lute, by the way, is more like the Spanish than that found anywhere else. The Spanish characteristic being six pairs of strings and a flattened back." The Aguilars tell us that they had to delve for their music in libraries everywhere. Some of their finest things, they say, were found in the library of the Escorial in Madrid. Being written in old notation, they had to transcribe it. Modern composers have written music especially for the Quartet. Turina has been the most generous of these. It is of especial interest to note that the quartet of lutes reproduce perfectly. We can faithfully say that hearing these young musicians play in concert and listening to their records played on a good phonograph give identical aesthetic impressions.

PERKINS SQUIRE

C-2142D

{ A Kiss Before the Dawn. (Perkins.) One side and
Evening Lullaby. (Squire.) One side. Played by J. H. Squire
Celeste Octet. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

The J. H. Squire Celeste Octet always plays in a simple, straight-forward fashion, without any undue effort to force the crocodile tears, and its work in these two pleasant trifles is subdued and satisfying.

HAYDN

V-D1589
IMPORTED

{ Sonata in D Major: Allegro con brio; Largo sostenuto—Finale
Presto. Two sides. Played by Violet Gordon Woodhouse
(Harpsichord). One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

The XX Century has brought a notable revival in the use of the harpsichord both as a solo instrument and in ensemble music. Recordings of the instrument are becoming more and more welcome for the reason that of late the quality of reproduction has been extremely faithful, clear and capturing. This Haydn sonata is characterized by a crystal clear design: joyous and sparkling in its fast movements, grave and stately in the slow one. The record will appeal by reason of its delicacy and charm and, to a great extent, by Mrs. Woodhouse's superb playing. We have here distilled for us an air of XVIII Century grace and refinement.

COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS^{*} SERIES

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV—*Scheherazade*

The great Russian's superb orchestral suite, inspired by tales from that amazing treasure-house of romance *The Arabian Nights*, is one of the wonders of the world's musical literature. Its fascinating movements are newly recorded for Columbia by Gaubert and the Orchestra of the Paris Conservatory in a performance which mirrors every detail of strength and beauty.



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BACH—*Suite No. 3, in D Major.*

This noble example of the great master's distinctive style, containing the famous *Air for G String* as originally written, is familiar as one of the outstanding works in the classic tradition. Its interpretation by the Brussels Royal Conservatory Orchestra under Désiré Defauw's direction brings forth in perfection the severe loveliness of its delightful measures.

Columbia Masterworks Set No. 135

Bach: Suite No. 3, in D Major. By Désiré Defauw and Orchestra of the Brussels Royal Conservatory. In Five Parts, on Three 12-Inch Records. \$6.00 with album.

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BERLIOZ—*Roman Carnival Overture, in 3 parts—with*

STRAVINSKY—*Firebird: Berceuse*

By Gabriel Pierné and Colonne Orchestra, Paris. Columbia Record Nos. G67744-D and G67745D.† 12 inch, \$2.00 each.



GRIEG—*Ballade in G Minor, Op. 24, in 4 parts*

By Leopold Godowsky. Columbia Record Nos. 67746-D and 67747-D. 12-inch, \$2.00 each.

MOUSSORGSKY—*Khovanstchina: Prelude—with* **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV—*Flight of the Bumble-Bee.***

By Sir Hamilton Harty and Hallé Orchestra. Columbia Record No. 67743-D. 12-inch, \$2.00.

† Records so marked are offered for sale in U.S.A. and Canada only



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MUSIC OF THE FUTURE

CARRILLO
C-50216D

Preludio a Cristobal Colon. Two sides. Played by the 13th Sound Ensemble of Havana under the direction of Angel Reyes. (Played in 1-4, 1-8 and 1-16 tones.) One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

Here is an unique record and one to be cherished by those musicians and musical experimenters who are interested in experimental trends and scientific developments in the realm of musical pathfinding. It means comparatively little to hear at a concert a demonstration of new adventures and essays into acoustical investigation when the exploitation cannot be repeated or made familiar enough for careful deliberation as to the artistic value of the application. One had opportunity, several seasons ago, to hear Senor Carrillo's music at Philadelphia Orchestra concerts and under the auspices of *The League of Composers*, in New York City. The difficulty of accustoming the ear to intervals of less than the quarter-tone is not lessened by infrequent hearings of works utilizing such divided intervals. The *Preludio* is the first record of its kind, and we hail it enthusiastically. Its support will warrant future releases of other recordings of works from the musicians' laboratories.

Julian Carrillo was born at San Luis Potosi, Mexico, in 1875. He has worked for thirty-some years upon the problem of dividing the musical interval called a tone into sixteen parts. The following information has been supplied to Mr. Lawrence Gilman by Senor Carrillo and it is from Mr. Gilman's Philadelphia Orchestra program notes that we quote: "Carrillo has evolved what he calls the 'System of the Thirteenth Sound' by which he means to signify his intention of breaking down the existing twelve-note scale system of intervals, and the chords built upon it, and substituting for it a greatly extended system built entirely on sub-divisions up to the sixteenth. He has for many years been composing in sixteenth-tones, while certain of his European contemporaries, such as Busoni, Mollendorf and Haba, have experimented with quarter-tones and thirds; and he has developed instruments capable of playing in minute sub-divisions.

"The System of the Thirteenth Sound' assumes, first, the possibility of the production of new sounds, and, second, the possibility of hearing these new sounds. Carrillo has solved the problem of how to produce these new sounds on musical instruments, how to write them, how to form with them melodies and harmonies. He has already elaborated a 'writing method' of Solfa, Harmony, etc.

"Carrillo was aware, from his study of physics, that the limit of vibrations that the ear is able to perceive is 72,000; yet our classical system set, as its limit, seven octaves, or only eight-five sounds. 'The Theory of the Thirteenth Sound' brings to the musical world a promise of 72,000 sounds. But is the human ear able to perceive 72,000 sounds? On a basis of sixteenth-tones, Carrillo has succeeded in increasing to ninety-six the twelve sounds of the octave, twelve more sounds than those that the piano has in seven octaves."

The form of *Preludio a Cristobal Colon* is not complex. The different subjects may easily be distinguished and their variations followed. The instrumentation, as well as we can discern without the assistance of a score, is a string (violin, 'cello, harp, guitarre), brass, woodwind, percussion, and voice combination. The soprano voice part is sung with extreme flexibility and the ensemble is at all times under the expert control of Senor Reyes. The recording is clear and leaves no doubt as to the correctness of reproduction.

Outstanding Victor Red Seal Records Just Released

It is a far cry from the stirring "Prophet," as sung by Chaliapin to the "Suggestion Diabolique," as played by Moiseivitch—but such is the wide range of entertainment encompassed by this month's list of Victor Red Seal Records. Every one of the records listed here is worth your hearing . . . many of them you will want to own. Hear them all at your earliest opportunity.

Classical Symphony, in D Major (Prokofieff, Op. 25). Played by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Serge Koussevitzky on Victor Records 7196 and 7197. The final record face contains the "Scherzo and March" from Prokofieff's "Love for Three Oranges." List Price, \$4.00.

When the King Went Forth to War (Koene-mann) and

The Prophet (Poushkin—Rimsky-Korsakow, Op. 49). Sung by Feodor Chaliapin on Victor Record 7199. List Price, \$2.00.

La Gioconda—Cielo e mar! (Ponchielli) and
L'Elisir d'Amore — Una furtiva lagrima (Donizetti). Sung by Beniamino Gigli on Victor Record 7194. List Price, \$2.00.

Falstaff—Sul fil d'un soffio etesio (Verdi) and

La Sonnambula—Ah! Non credea mirarti (Bellini). Toti Dal Monte and Members of Orchestra of La Scala, Milan, on Victor Record 7198. List Price, \$2.00.

Fairy Tale (In E Minor) (Nicholas Medtner, Op. 35, No. 2) and

Suggestion Diabolique (Prokofieff, Op. 4, No.

4). Played by Benno Moiseivitch on Victor Record 1449. List Price, \$1.50.

Allemande (Croft) and

Fiesta Mora en Tànger. Played by the Aguilar Lute Quartet on Victor Record 9397. List Price, \$1.50.

Tango (Elman) and

Album Leaf—Romance (Wagner-Wilhelmj). Played by Mischa Elman on Victor Record 7195. List Price, \$2.00.

Other New Victor Records of Interest

Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna—Overture (Suppé). Played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra on Victor Record 36004. List Price, \$1.25.

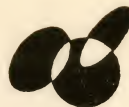
First Symphony — Finale (Louis Vierne). Played by Fernando Germani on Victor Record 22287. List Price, \$0.75.

His Majesty, The King's Speech (At the Opening of the Five-Power Naval Conference on January 21, 1930). Victor Record 22338. List Price, \$0.75.



Victor Division
R C A VICTOR COMPANY, Inc.
Camden, New Jersey

AND OTHER DISCS



- V-54132 { Tu Chow Feng. In two parts.
 V-54133 { Yu Tang Chuen. In two parts.
 V-54134 { Chuen Chiu Pei. One side and
 Ma Ku Shien Shou. One side.
 V-54135 { Hai Sze. In two parts. Chinese (Mandarin Dialect) By Mei
 Lan-Fang with Chinese Orchestral accompaniment.
 Four 10-inch discs. Price, \$0.75 each.

One of the outstanding events of the present theatrical season is the visit to New York of Mei Lan-Fang, the greatest living actor of China. Mr. Mei is playing an engagement in New York after which he will make a tour to the Pacific Coast. The Victor Division, R C A Victor Company, takes especial pride in announcing the first four orthophonic records of this great artist, who, like the other famous actors of the Orient assumes feminine roles. A typical Chinese orchestra furnishes music for these excerpts, which are spoken in the Mandarin dialect. Not only Chinese, but American collectors, will want to own records of this great artist's voice.

- V-5519 { L'avare—Acte 4, Scène 7 (Moliere) One side and
 Athalie—Acte 2, Scène 5 (Racine) One side. Recitation in French
 by Monsieur E. M. Stéphan.
 One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

Classic passages recited by a foremost French actor.

- V-4181 { Excerpts from the repertoire of Guitry and Printemps. *Mozart*,
 and { *L'Amour Masque*, *Mariette* and *Deburau*. By Yvonne Prin-
 V-4182 { temps and Sacha Guitry.
 V-9643 { Two 10-inch discs and three 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set
 to { No. C-8. Price, complete, \$7.50.
 V-9645 {
 Incl. {

Sacha Guitry and Yvonne Printemps, husband and wife, are known in this country for the productions they gave a few years ago. Guitry, who is not only an actor, but a playwright also, comes naturally by both talents. His father was one of the most prominent actors in France, and his grandfather was a famous novelist. His wife, besides being a brilliant actress, possesses a lovely singing voice. Their records, in which they talk and sing, are all in French and represent their outstanding successes. This album is noteworthy for its wonderful French diction. For the person who is a French student, it is a real find, for it is characterized by witty brilliant dialogue that is tinged with a touch of French spiciness. Its value as entertainment is great, and for diction it is educational as well.

Disques' Best-Records-of-the-Month Are Sold at Lyon & Healy's

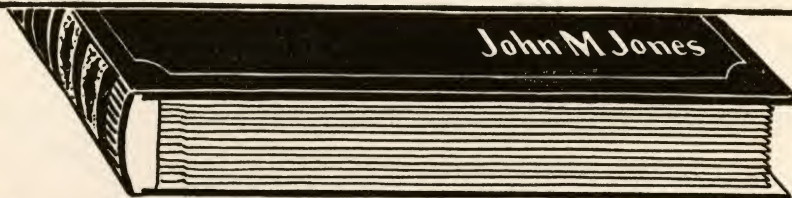
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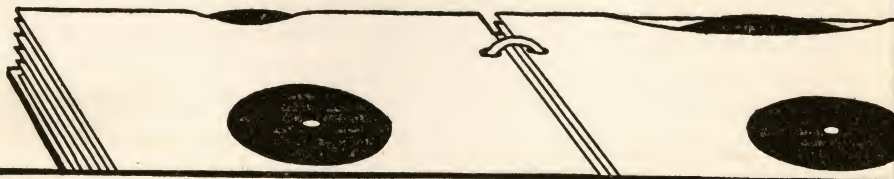
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Music of Rudolf Friml: (1) Improvisation; (2) Amour Coquet; (3) La Danse des Demoiselles; (4) Mignonette (Rezeda); (5) L'Amour-Toujours-l'Amour; (6) Ma Belle (from "The Three Musketeers"); (7) Chanson; (8) Veil Dance (from the Japanese Ballet "O Mitake San"); (9) Selections from "You're in Love"; (10) Selections from "High Jinks"; (11) Selections from "Rose-Marie"; (12) Selections from "Katinka"; (13) Selections from "The Vagabond King"; (14) Selections from "The Firefly." Rendered by Rudolf Friml (Piano), Victor Salon Group and Orchestra under the direction of Nathaniel Shilkret.
Five 12-inch discs enclosed in an album. Victor Set No. C-9. Price, \$7.50.

Rudolf Friml is one of the very few composers of popular music who can still write tunes that are not hopelessly lost in a swamp of mawkish sentiment. A native of Bohemia, he first won attention in this country as a concert pianist, playing in recitals, as soloist with an orchestra in New York, and in joint appearances with Jan Kubelik, the violinist. His ability in devising lively and attractive scores for musical comedies and light operas is well known, and he has a long string of Broadway successes to his credit. This album, comprising a collection of his tunes, has been arranged by Nathaniel Shilkret, and is similar in nature to the Herbert, Foster and Nevin albums previously released. Mr. Shilkret keeps within decent bounds that rather excessive fondness of his to embellish and overdress unassuming little airs. The result is a collection of enjoyable and likeable melodies which, considering the public for whom they are intended, are presented in a thoroughly effective and competent fashion. Friml himself plays two piano solos.

V-22338

H. M. The King's Speech at the Opening of the Five-Power Naval Conference on January 21, 1930. Recorded in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords, London, England.
One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

A record of real historical value.



TUNES OF THE MOMENT

University of Maine Stein Song by Rudy Vallee and His Connecticut Yankees (Victor 22321). Price, \$0.75.

A Bench in the Park (The King of Jazz) by Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra (Columbia 2164-D). Price, \$0.75.



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DURAND EDITION

and

La Sirene Musicale

HONEGGER, POULENC AND MILHAUD

(Continued from page 81)

his attempts in the chanson form are not very satisfying and that he depends wholly upon his French predecessors in this field. At any rate, the fact that the piano accompaniment is performed by the composer makes the disc desirable if for no other reason than an historical one. The accompaniment, usually written in a key other than the one used for the voice, colors the text as the mood suggests.

Five years ago Emile Vuillermoz, eminent propagandist for French music, exclaimed, "His mind well-poised, free from prejudices and fears, Arthur Honegger manifests a balance not usually found in creators of his age. He goes his way with regular step, without haste or apprehension. And I am one of those who believe that his way leads to fame." If not the revolutionary that he has been made out to be, this modernist—yet in his thirties—is an interesting and stimulating personality. Records of his and other present day writers' music come at times as a breath of fresh and very delectable atmosphere. Honegger is a man of his time and to us his utterances are more enjoyable than many of the constantly played artificialities of yesteryear.

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"THE WORLD'S RECORD SHOP"

10TH AND WALNUT STREETS

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CORRESPONDENCE



Letters and manuscripts should be addressed to the Editor, Disques, Published by the H. Royer Smith Company, 10th and Walnut Streets, Philadelphia, Pa., and should be written on one side only of the paper. A stamped, self addressed envelope must accompany the article or letter if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor takes no responsibility for the views or opinions expressed by correspondents.

DUPLICATIONS

Editor, Disques:

It has long been a source of amazement to me and the fact remains that conductors of recording bodies and recording artists in general are for the most part totally unaware of the vast musical field enveloped by the phonograph. Recording engineers and manufacturing officials likewise exhibit an ignorance of what other companies record and go on registering the same compositions, operatic arias, etc. I paid a visit some little while ago to the studio of an artist who occasionally records for one of the larger concerns and was surprised to note that the good man, not being at all interested in recording developments (outside of his own organization's playing), neither possessed a gramophone nor a slight knowledge of the contents of any single record catalogue, either domestic or foreign. He showed great concern when I told him that European companies were recording

many works which were imported and on sale by a few dealers in America and which were not available elsewhere. When asked about his future intentions in recording endeavor he became enthusiastic and began listing several pieces for future reproduction, one of which has already been excellently put on discs no less than four times. I exclaimed at this intended duplication and was confronted by the rejoinder that certainly a great many admirers of his organization would want *their* interpretation. I wonder? Sometimes a better interpretation is needed, but in this era of fine scientific sound reproduction, and when many of the world's greatest artists are perpetuating their virtuosity on discs, let us have less in duplication and more of variety.

Sincerely yours,
NATHANIEL PASTOR.

Bryn Mawr, Pa.

THE HARSANYI QUARTET

Editor, Disques:

Mr. Copley sent us the letter you wrote to him regarding the records of the Harsanyi Quartet, made by our Quartet, and as Mr. Copley does not know personally about the composer, Harsanyi, I will be pleased to give you all necessary information.

He is still a young man in the early thirties or about that age. He is a Hungarian and had his musical education with the best Hungarian composers and teachers. He has lived in Paris for six or seven years and had the best criticisms; he is estimated by all good musicians as a good artist who knows his work, whether one sympathizes with that work or not.

His works are played all over Europe—in the great centres at least; and they have won in musical circles always great interest. Almost all his works are printed, which is astonishing enough for a man of his age, considering the fact that his work is modern. But it was easy for him to convince the editors of his great talent.

They are in the Universal Edition, Vienna, Sirene Musicale, Paris, and Senart and Haufel, Paris.

Printed are: for chamber music—Violin Sonata, Violoncello Sonata, Pieces for Piano, Suite for Piano, Sonata for Piano, Trio for Violin, Violoncello and Piano, String Quartet.

The Quartet played by the Roth Quartet has besides the record-making been introduced in Paris, Berlin, Vienna and London.

His work is absolutely modern, but the records are so well done and the tone is so beautiful in sonority, the score comes out so clearly that it will highly interest music lovers to hear this work, especially as after several hearings the work becomes quite clear. It is brilliant, full of life, color and rhythms and has some Hungarian and Russian folklore themes in some parts. It surely will not offend even the most conventionally developed ears. It is one of the works that becomes more interesting every time one hears it; I personally think it one of the best modern works. Get the records and listen to them several times is all I can say further; it'll convince you of its worth.

Sincerely yours,
ALBERT VAN DOORN,
Roth Quartet.

Kansas City, Mo.

BOOKS

Music 1900-1930. By Alfred J. Swan. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Price, \$1.25.

Although this little book of some eighty-six pages bears the imposing title of *Music 1900-1930*, it actually makes no attempt at a thorough survey of the music written during that period. As Mr. Swan is at some pains to explain in the opening sentence of his Preface: "The present survey of the music of our century is but a reflection of the stages through which the author has passed in the evolution of his musical creed."

Some idea of Mr. Swan's musical creed may best be gained from quoting him. Stravinsky, for example, is viewed rather biliously. "Something cannot be born out of nothing. Stravinsky has made light of this principle in almost every work of his, and this alone would place his output beyond the pale of art." Prokofieff fares somewhat better. "And yet, balancing up the achievements of Prokofieff, we are forced to admit that there is more on the positive side than on the negative." Honegger, though the "most thoroughgoing of the group (*Les Six*)," nevertheless is "still staggering in all directions, like one giddy and uncertain of his movements." He will not last much longer: "his end is also near, for there are neither deep-rooted emotions in him, nor a legitimately acquired mastery." And Ravel, who was "essentially the outcome of the pre-war period of ultra-refinement," is "practically silent now."

But the future is not wholly dismal. "Music has been through sad times. Signs of improvement are not wanting. Are we on the eve of a wholesome, constructive period? Who knows!" Turning to England, Mr. Swan finds Arnold Bax and Vaughan Williams producing significant works. And in Russia Medtner, Myaskovsky and Rachmaninoff seem to him to stand out saliently.

Thus it will be seen that Mr. Swan's opinions, in the main, are pretty orthodox. Many will find the omission of the name of Richard Strauss curious; others will be puzzled to find fourteen pages, a rather large proportion in so small a book, devoted to Scriabin. But while Mr. Swan's opinions may arouse considerable disagreement, it will have to be admitted that he states them clearly and plausibly, and in simple, effective English. It is a very earnest little book.

An Hour With American Music. By Paul Rosenfeld. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1929. Price, \$1.00.

Mr. Rosenfeld gives a skilful and provocative resumé of American music. He shows, in his inimitable manner, that our music in the past has been largely dependent on the great Europeans. But, claims Mr. Rosenfeld, the music of America is now beginning its independent existence in the compositions of Roy Harris, Edgar Varese, Aaron Copland, Carlos Chavez and others. The writer does not believe that American music is jazz. In the beginning of his essay he states: "American music is not jazz. Jazz is not music. Jazz remains a striking indigenous product, a small sounding folk-chaos, counterpart of other national developments. What we call *music*, however, is a force, adjusted to the stream of the world in which materials float and elements play, and active like them upon the human situation; and bold and debonair as it is, seductive with woodwind in minor thirds and fuller of bells than a bayadere, our characteristic 'dance-music' is cheerfully quiescent." Further, in the chapter devoted to Copland and Gershwin, he shows where the first has laid hold of the norms of our popular music and utilized them for artistic purposes and while the latter composer's *Rhapsody in Blue*, *Piano Concerto* and *An American in Paris* have found a good deal of popular favor, it is doubtful whether Gershwin's vision permits him an association with the artists. Gershwin's compositions drowse one in a pink world of received ideas and sentiments. The *Rhapsody in Blue* is circus music, pre-eminent in the sphere of tinsel and fustian. In daylight, nonetheless, it stands vaporous with its second-hand ideas and ecstasies; its old-fashioned Lisztian ornament and brutal, calculated effects, not so much music, as jazz dolled up. Assuredly, Mr. Rosenfeld is right. And it was time that someone pulled aside the cloak of spurious genius conjured by Mr. Walter Damrosch, among others, and thrown around the shoulders of the king of tin-pan alley.

The music of Edgar Varese is deemed by Mr. Rosenfeld as the most dynamic, rich and largely expressive music coming from America today. *An Hour With American Music* covers a lot of ground; from Spirituals and Mountain Songs, through MacDowell, Loefler, Ornstein, Rudhyar, Sessions, Weiss, Thomson, Ruggles, Parker, Taylor, and others to Varese. It is extremely well written and the subject is covered with brilliancy and uncommon critical acumen. It is interesting to note that only Gershwin and Taylor, among the living musicians treated in this book, is gramophonically represented.

